

INSIDE SOCCER

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GLORY EXPRESS STILL ON TRACK

Round two of the NSL once again showed Perth Glory, together with Northern Spirit, is way ahead of the pack, when it comes to crowds and excitement. Glory's 16,176, at their first home game against Marconi Stallions is proof yet again that the soccer express in the West is showing no signs of slowing down.

On the contrary, media interest is continuing to grow, with TV crews at Glory training and massive print media coverage (particularly in Monday's *West Australian*.)

As Glory signing Kasey Wehrman said to Inside Soccer recently, 'everywhere you go the media is there.'

It's hard to think this is actually Australia.

On the ground and Bernd Stange's side got off to an entertaining start with a six-goal thriller that ended 3-3. Glory now has four points from a possible six, while Marconi's Sean Babic is the leading NSL scorer with three goals.

Newcastle Breakers should be proud of the 6,023 crowd they pulled for their Friday night arm wrestle with traditional NSW rivals Wollongong Wolves. The club, under new owner David Hall, has some big plans and Hall, himself a keen soccer man who knows the Newcastle area well, believes crowds of 10,000 plus are possible in the future.

Certainly with Lee Sterrey they have a coach capable of bringing out the best in a side that should come home strongly.

The 6,023 was certainly an accurate figure, unlike a certain Sydney game.

Parramatta Power's Friday night game at Stadium Australia - the first NSL match ever at the showpiece venue - was a surreal event. With the shouts of the players reverberating around the massive structure, it must have been a peculiar experience for the players as well. Fortunately it seems there is a small and dedicated support base already for Power, yet in such a stadium it was always going to be hard to drum up some atmosphere. 15,000 looks small never mind the posted attendance of just over 7,000.

Power needs time to build on this. Certainly some of Northern Spirit's relationship building it did with its fans - particularly early on - has stood the north shore side in good stead and could be something the club from Parramatta will look into.

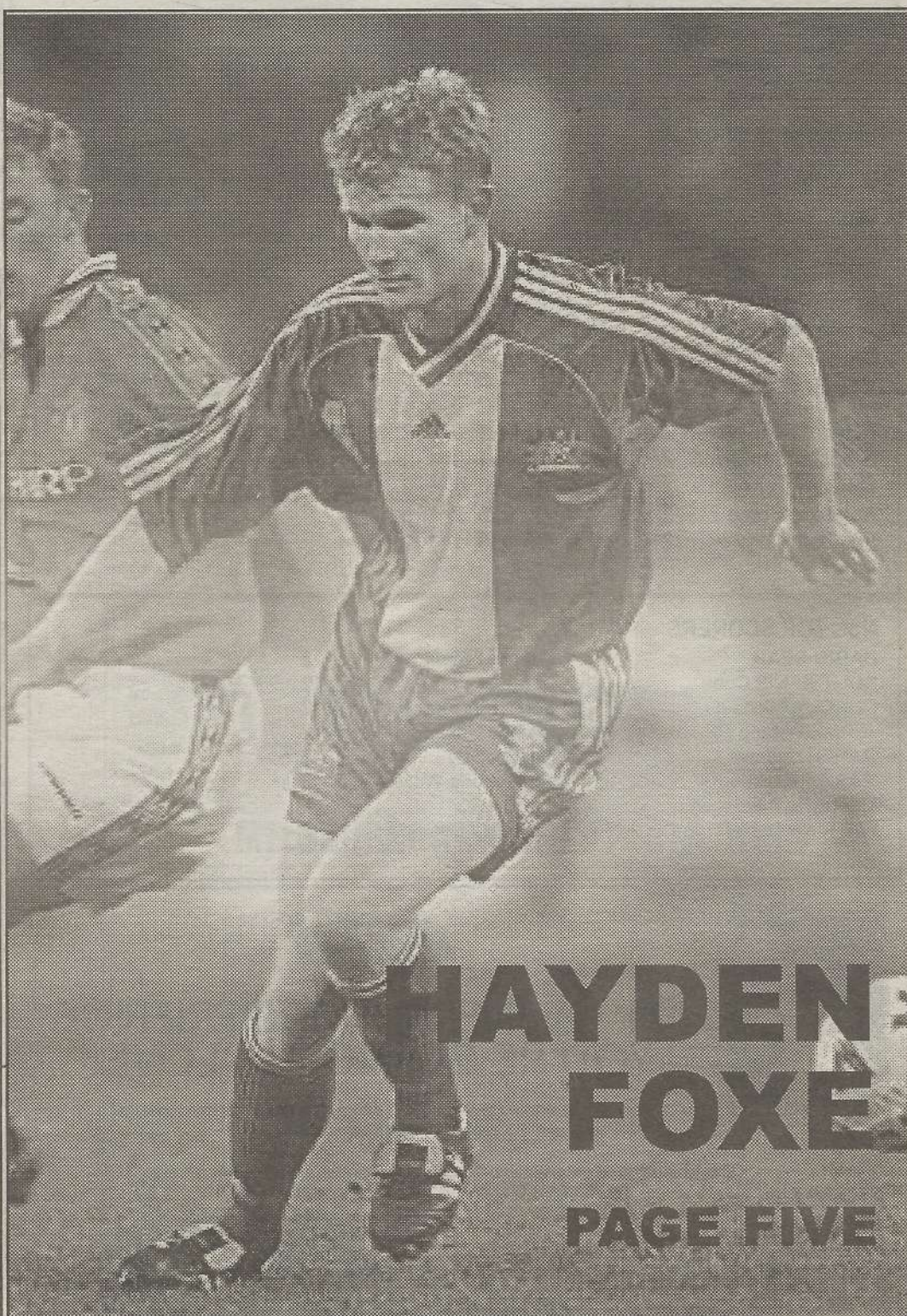
And despite not playing anywhere near what they are capable of, Power has four points from six. When they hit their straps they will be a real force, and that in itself will bring more fans in at Parramatta Stadium.

You really do have to feel sorry for Carlton though. The club is trying its hardest to bring the Melbourne fans in, including hosting interesting pre-match entertainment (fireworks, guest singers etc.), a beer garden on the track at Olympic Park and money spent on advertising featuring its imported 'Brit Pack'. As one staunch Carlton fan said to us recently: "I've not much faith in the Victorian public."

Soccer Australia posted a figure of just over 4,000 for Carlton's Friday night game against Gippsland Falcons.

Sadly at the nearby MCG, a hybrid game of AFL/Soccer (dubbed 'International Rules') pulled 63,000, which may have accounted for a few fans, but really what do our clubs have to do in Melbourne?

CONTINUED PAGE THREE



PLUS: EVERY NSL GAME COVERED IN-DEPTH, MILLENNIUM STARS, GREG BLAKE AND NYL.

INSIDE SOCCER: YOUR QUALITY WEEKLY DEVOTED TO AUSTRALIAN SOCCER

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S-NEWS

INSIDE
SOCCER'S
AUSTRALIAN NEWS
AND GOSS

BEST WISHES TO YOUNG STEPHEN POPOVICH

It's not common knowledge but Canberra Cosmos defender Toppy Popovich's son Stephen, 10, has had heart problems for some time. Last week he had to endure open heart surgery - his third time - after being born with a defect in his heart. All the best from everyone at Canberra Cosmos and Inside Soccer, our thoughts and love are with you.

SOUTH AMERICAN TOUR

The NSW Under 17 team has been invited to play in a tournament in Chile in January again the Turkey, Chile, USA U17 national teams, as well as sides from Bayer Leverkusen, River Plate, Cerro Porteno (Paraguay) and a Chilean University side.

SUMMER SOCCER

Check this out from the I.S. archives. This is from a story called 'Cup Final Fiasco' dated Tuesday September 29 1981, published in Australian Soccer Weekly. It talked about the Phillips (remember them?) Cup Final that was held in Canberra that year. The small crowd - they estimated about 2,500 - was bumped up to 6,000 (such things never happen these days, do they?) despite the ASF spending big on marketing. 'The decision to go ahead with the Cup Final in neutral Canberra was taken by the same people who advocate summer soccer,' it opined. 'When the summer soccer nonsense raises its ugly head again we should remember that.' So there!

ENGLISH STRIKER FOR WOLVES

English striker Stuart Young, 26, has signed for Wollongong Wolves from Singapore S-League side Woodlands Wellington FC. He played with Wolves' former Carlton defender David Cervinski in the S-League. Young's manager at W.W.F.C., R. Vengadasalam, is probably less media friendly than his new boss at Brandon Park, judging by this in-depth interview 'Venga' did with a Singapore paper.

So what are your comments on tomorrow's derby game against Sembawang Rangers?

"No comments," shot back R. Vengadasalam, the Woodlands manager.

Can your team win?

"No comments."

Have you thrown in the towel?

"No comments."

Are you frightened of Jita Singh (Sembawang's coach)?

"No comments."

What about the intense rivalry between the two clubs?

"No comments."

And we thought Branko Culina didn't like the press!!

SHARK TURNS BLUE?

Remember Paul Pezos? He played for the Sharks last year. He is currently on trial for Birmingham City (who have another former Shark Stan Lazaridis). Pezos played against Burnley in the Pontins League game last week.

SOCCER AUSTRALIA CARPET TILE CRISIS!!

As reported (!) in another weekly publication last week, Soccer

Australia has decided on carpet tiles instead of carpeting for its new offices which, according to the writer (and we use that word advisedly), makes it 'a nightmare' for the milkman. Naturally the national media, perhaps tiring of the situation in East Timor, has picked up on this story, in fact I.S. has fielded calls from CNN and The Times in London asking for our perspective on the crisis. When we rang the the Amalgamated Milk Vendors Association here in Sydney, it was tight-lipped on the situation. They asked: "What crisis? We've no idea what you are talking about?" Soccer Australia Media Manager Rozanna Bozabaljian was equally evasive: "I didn't know we had carpet tiles!" was her response. We will follow this issue with great interest as will, no doubt, the major Australian and international broadsheets and wider media. We hope to bring you photos of Soccer Australia's milkman having his nightmare in coming issues.

MISSION ACCOMPLISHED

Frank Farina's European trip has been a success. All the major players he has spoken to in England and on the continent have indicated they will be back for the Brazil tour. At this point there will also be a Chile tour in February for the LG Socceroos, playing against the host nation and two Euro countries, and there is a chance of a four nation tournament here at the end of the Euro season, against an Asian side plus two nations not involved with Euro 2000.

LIVE CALL OF FORCE GAME

Coast FM will broadcast live this Friday night the Force v Power game. It kicks off at 7.45 pm for match start of 8pm. Dom Rinaldo, professional commentator will be the anchor man. Ex-FIFA referee and player Donald Campbell, OAM, will co-commentate, with special comments from ex-Australian goalkeeper Robbie Parks, ex-Australian mid-field terror 'BIG' Eric Norman and Alby Kidd, ex-Scottish international and West Adelaide star. Coast FM Soccer is on Sunday mornings in Adelaide.

RANGERS RULE

Roy Hay reports that Geelong Rangers reached the final of the End of Season Cup in the Western Victoria Soccer Association, beating league champion Breakwater Eagles by three own goals in a three-one win. Breakwater had the better of the early exchanges but failed to take its chances apart from an excellent curling strike by Tomas Pawlak which flew past three defenders on its way into the net. Rangers then went up a gear and equalised when the Breakwater keeper punched the ball into his own net following a corner kick. The second goal came when Mark Linney got to the bye-line and cut the ball back only for the onrushing Brendan White to put the ball past his own goalie. Rangers' third goal was even more bizarre than the first two. Rod van der Chys's shot hit the post and rebounded off the keeper's heel and flew back into the net.

	(Home)						(Away)							
	P	W	D	L	F	A	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts	GD
Brisbane Strikers	2	1	0	0	2	1	1	0	0	1	0	6	2	
Carlton	2	0	1	0	1	1	1	0	0	3	0	4	3	
Perth Glory	2	0	1	0	3	3	1	0	0	1	0	4	1	
Woll. Wolves	2	1	0	0	2	1	0	1	0	2	2	4	1	
Parramatta Power	2	1	1	0	3	2	0	0	0	0	0	4	1	
Sydney Olympic	2	0	1	0	2	2	1	0	0	1	0	4	1	
Canberra Cosmos	2	1	0	1	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	3	
South Melbourne	2	1	0	0	2	0	0	0	1	1	2	3	1	
Northern Spirit	2	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	2	2	3	0	
Sydney United	2	1	0	1	2	3	0	0	0	0	0	3	-1	
Marconi Stallions	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	4	4	2	0	
Newcastle Breakers	2	0	1	0	2	2	0	1	0	2	2	2	0	
Gippsland Falcons	2	0	0	1	0	1	0	1	0	1	1	1	-1	
Melbourne Knights	2	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	1	1	2	0	-2	
Adelaide Force	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	1	5	0	-4	
Football Kingz	2	0	0	1	0	3	0	0	1	1	2	0	-4	



NSL TOP SCORERS

BABIC SEAN	Marconi Stallions	3
BOUSIANIS Con	Perth Glory	2
CURCIJA Michael	South Melbourne	2
JERMEN Mario	Sydney United	2
MARTH Andrew	Carlton SC	2
MASI Esala	Wollongong Wolves	2
MOREIRA Alex	Carlton SC	2
WATKINS Daniel	Canberra Cosmos	2



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CONTINUED FROM FRONT PAGE

Of course some will say that Carlton should 'Melbournise' its name - along the lines of Melbourne Blues. After all, if you supported Arsenal you are hardly likely to follow Spurs Rugby Club would you? Perhaps this is something to consider?

Having said that, Soccer Australia has to look at Melbourne as a special case and throw some well-targeted funds at this problem.

Or maybe another club based in the Eastern Suburbs of Melbourne is the answer? One that is, broad-based, new and exciting. Meanwhile Melbourne flounders as the rest of the country looks on.

It's a long way from Perth to Melbourne in more ways than one.

Brisbane, a club that was written off by everyone (including Inside Soccer) has a 100% record after the weekend's games. A 1-0 win away to Knights in round one was followed up by a controversial 2-1 win at Suncorp over Adelaide Force in round two.

While a crowd of under 5,000 saw the game (and that's something Inside Soccer intends to look at i.e. how the 1996 Grand Final successes - on and off the park - have been frittered away), John Kosmina's side is showing some old-fashioned grit in this, the coach's second season.

Nevertheless, the situation with striker Wayne Knipe is not something the club can be proud of. Knowing Knipe he is not the sort of person that would go 'walkabout' as one spurious Brisbane press report suggested. Meanwhile coach Kosmina has shut the door on the entertaining forward (see match report on page eight). We wish him the best in finding another club, and the word is it could be Japan.

This week's round sees three games on Friday night. Northern Spirit's much anticipated first home game is against the organized Newcastle Breakers. Last year's 0-0 draw will be a stinging reminder for the North Sydney faithful that the days of an easy win over the Newcastle side are long



Mark Silic of Knights clashes with Power's Mike Santalab at Stadium Australia on Friday night.

gone. And with two solid draws, Lee Sterrey's men would be happy with another one pointer to maintain their unbeaten start after what was a poor pre-season preparation.

The struggling Adelaide Force will host Parra Power on the Sydneysiders' first trip outside of NSW. The home side will be desperate to win in front of what should be a large home crowd, particularly as NSL soccer is now just a once a fortnight proposition for Adelaide fans.

The other Friday night game is Canberra Cosmos, playing their third home game in a row. The visitors are Brisbane Strikers, who sit on top of the NSL after two rounds. Both sides have made a bright start but don't be surprised if Cosmos can maintain their Friday Night Fever and win again.

On Saturday Wolves play Sydney Olympic while Sydney United travel to Gippsland Falcons, and on Sunday the Kingz will have an enormous task to hold out South Melbourne, while Marconi will play its first home game against Carlton and Melbourne Knights host Perth Glory.

*Fixtures supplied by Soccer Australia and correct at time of printing.

DIDULICA AND RONALDO DO LUNCH

By Roy Hay

Geelong's Olyroo goalkeeper Joey Didulica hasn't wasted his time getting into the big time since signing for Dutch giant Ajax Amsterdam, and this weekend he had lunch with Brazilian superstar Ronaldo. Brazil played Holland in a friendly match and after the game Didulica and some of his team-mates had a chance to meet the Brazilian players. Didulica came away with a pair of boots autographed by the great man.

On the field, Didulica played in a practice match keeping a clean sheet in a one-nil win, but he picked up a foot injury, though his brother John reports it does not appear too serious.

Meanwhile another Geelong player in Europe, Richie O'Sullivan is reported to have had a good trial with Doncaster Rovers in England. He has won the North Geelong best and fairest for 1999, from Ivan Ljubicic with keeper Marko Saric a close third.

The Melbourne Knights injury jinx of Geelong players continues, with Mijo Trupkovic pulling a hamstring early in the match against Parramatta Power on Friday. He joins John Didulica and Steven Tillinger on the injury list.

In other news around Australia, Ange Postecoglou left for Brazil yesterday to attend the draw for the World Club Championships. Meanwhile, South signing Richie Alagich will be sidelined for another six weeks due to a chipped ankle bone.

It is understood from our sources that some key senior players - via

vehicles such as the players' union - are agitating for teams such as Gippsland to be dropped (along with Sydney United, Melbourne Knights and Sydney Olympic). It is also understood that some of this group also believe that the two biggest inhibitors to development of the game is (1) the current Board and (2) the State/Territory Federations

At Friday night's Power v Knights game was a group of youngsters playing in the Indigenous Games. The Alice Springs boys and girls LOVED the Power game and LOVED Stadium Australia.

Jimmy Hayes, the long-time ACT-based coach has been inducted into that the ACT Soccer Hall of Fame.

IMG's Martin Jolly believes the upcoming Brazil tour will be a success because the games will be taken seriously. "The fact that these are Frankie Farina's first games on the road to 2002 World Cup make these games dead serious. Of course Brazil never like losing and neither does Frankie, plus huge stars like Kewell, and with the prices starting at just \$30, it is an absolute bargain." Brazil will name their squad at the end of the month and they have promised a strong set of players to take on the Farina LG Socceroos.

Nov 24 is when the two final consortia will be announced in Perth for the building of the new stadium that should house Perth Glory in 2001. Glory feels it will be hard to grow at Perth Oval, it only houses 17,000. Expect a final decision on tendering by April 2000. Perth Glory deserves a 25,000 all-seater.

SAPPHIRES ON FIRE

After a double-header at the State Soccer Centre, Valentine Park, this weekend, the NSW Sapphires have established a four point lead at the top of the Ansett Summer Series Women's National League. They lead with 12 points followed by the SASI Pirates on eight.

Against the Canberra Eclipse and Victoria Vision, the Sapphires won both games 4-1 - both in fine and warm conditions over a balmy Sydney weekend.

Prominent amongst the Sapphires again were teenager Kelly Gobleowski, Heather Garriock and Matildas' stars Julie Murray and Anissa Tann-Darby.

Former Cameroon international and West Adelaide player, Cyrille Ndongo-Keller, who is coach of the Sapphires said he was very pleased with their form to date.

"We're doing well and we're leading the competition - but there's always room for improvement," he said.

The NSW Sapphires next fixture is against the South Australian Pirates at Hindmarsh Stadium on Sunday.

In other weekend results, NNSW Pride drew with SASI 2-2 and 1-1 with Victoria Vision, while QAS Sting thumped ACTAS Canberra Eclipse 5-1 and drew with SASI Pirates 0-0.

NEXT WEEK

Olympic's cool striker
PABLO CARDOZO talks
with Roger Sleeman, plus
Hendo's Spiritworld, the
new weekly column from
Northern Spirit's
PAUL HENDERSON



Pablo Cardozo, next week in Inside Soccer the Olympic striker chats with Roger Sleeman.



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Spirit's quality shines against inexperienced Utd

Yes we know it was last week, but people want to know what happened. So here is Paul Goodwin's match report from the Sydney United versus Northern Spirit round one game played on the holiday Monday at Edensor Park ...

A much depleted and very inexperienced Sydney United put up a brave fight in front of their own supporters, on the Labour Day holiday Monday, before going down 0-2 to a near full strength Northern Spirit in the first game of the 99-00 campaign.

United were well in the game in the first half and almost led at the break, only a superb stop by Spirit keeper Paul Henderson denying Nahuel Arrarte whose 30 yard shot thundered in towards goal on the stroke of half time.

Matthew Langdon was cutting a swathe through the United defence down the left from the moment the second half got under way and after a couple of close calls he set up Robbie Slater for the lead, the tiny wingman bursting into the box and laying the ball back nicely for the man they call 'bulldog' to steer it in low, off the post.

Langdon got to the left byline again at the hour mark and put over a perfect cross for David Seal to mark his debut with the simplest of headers in the middle of the area for a 2-0



Spirit keeper 'Hendo' climbs above the Sydney United pack in the round one game. Photo: Joe Palos

Seal 60

Yellow Cards: Velimir Kupresak 39 (SU), Steve Bozinovski 56 (SU), Clayton Zane 29 (NS),

Red Card: Robbie Enes 74 (NS)



Matt Langdon, the man of the match, crosses for David Seal to score the second goal for Spirit. Behind him are some of the 2,000 Spirit fans who made the crosstown journey. Photo: Joe Palos

scoreline.

Matthew Bingley had cleared off the Spirit line from a Joe Moric drive a few minutes earlier, but when Moric was again denied, this time by the quick work of Henderson in the 78th, it was clear that this would not be United's day.

Bingley and Rudan were solid at the back for Spirit, Henderson was back to his best after a shaky first half and Langdon was well on song as the game moved up a notch in the second half.

For United, Arrarte, Mario Jermen and Ray Younis all tried hard, while Tom Pondeljak was their most creative player and the one most likely to provide a breakthrough. On this occasion he was out of luck.

SYDNEY UNITED: J Crawley, R Younis, V Kupresak, E Bosnar, N Arrarte, M Jermen (M Jurilj 79), A Moric, T Pondeljak, T Maric, J Moric, N Bosevski (S Bozinovski 45)

NORTHERN SPIRIT: P Henderson, M Bingley, L Casserly, M Rudan, T Cranney, R Enes, P Bilokapic (M Cunico 77), R Slater, D Seal (G Arnold 62), C Zane, M Langdon

Goalscorers:

Northern Spirit: Robbie Slater 53, David

Best Player

3 Matthew Langdon

2 Tom Pondeljak

1 Mark Rudan

Referee: Mark Shield

Crowd: 5,023

An interested observer at the game was Soccerroo Hayden Foxe. This is what he said: "Yeah, it wasn't bad. Obviously it's hard the first game, everyone is still a bit unsure, but Spirit did a good job. They were out of it early, but they fought back."

"If United had taken their chances, who knows. I think Spirit can win the title under Arnie. He's done a good job last year."

In other news ... Tom Maric who started against Northern Spirit ripped five tendons in his wrists midweek, losing 200ml of blood when the window glass he was carrying at his home shattered. Maric will be out of action for eight weeks. We wish you a speedy recovery.

GREG BLAKE

**C7 SOCCER
COMMENTATOR**



Victorian Soccer Federation chairman and Soccer Australia director Joe Brondolino's dream of a NSL second division appears much closer to being realised than anyone contemplated.

SA chairman Basil Scarsella admitted as much last week, saying that the NSL will be cut back to between 12 and 14 teams and that those clubs which miss the cut would be offered the opportunity to form and play in a second division.

"The second division would initially comprise teams from New South Wales and Victoria, with the possible inclusion of a team from Adelaide," Scarsella was quoted as saying.

I presume some consideration will be given to the actual issues here, like the increasingly difficulty in gaining sponsorship, the sub-standard venues many clubs still use, travel costs and playing standards, given that over 100 of our very best boys are plying their trade overseas.

What started out as a whinge by Victorian clubs about having little or nothing to play for in an increasingly irrelevant state competition has become a crusade which might eventually see a return to the regrettable days of the mid 1980's.

A time in which we had two fairly mediocre divisions and 22 NSL clubs, many of which have now bitten the dust, and some of the games that couldn't have attracted flies to garbage dump.

Oh, for the halcyon days of Canterbury, Green Gully, Penrith and Inter Monaro - I can hardly wait!

What Brondolino and Scarsella should be considering seriously is the concept of setting up Australia wide NSL offices to attend to the localised needs of the media, clubs and supporters.

The idea was first raised a couple of year back but knocked on the head without too much deliberation, as far as I know.

Nothing grand mind you, but a one person operation perhaps run from the respective state headquarters would not be an unrealistic or costly exercise.

A hands-on approach to ticketing queries, merchandising, media inquiries, and day-to-day inquiries would not go astray and would add an NSL presence where there is none.

A little local knowledge would go a long way.

When Alex Moreira is on song Carlton likes to sing along. Moriera's opening round double at the Kingz was the fifth multiple strike of his NSL career and Carlton is 4-1-0 in games when dancing Alex hits his straps.

His strike rate is now 14 goals in 28 games, although he has actu-

ally only scored in eight of those games.

Ironic, isn't it? Leading the vocal push to 'Save Our Bears' is none other than former SA boss, one David Hill.

The very same David Hill who had no qualms about stitching up former NSL clubs Parramatta Eagles, Heidelberg United and Melbourne Zebras very early on in his time at the top in soccer.

From all reports his beloved North Sydney NRL club is at least a couple of million in the red, but I expect supporters of the Eagles, Bergers and Zebs won't be sticking their hands in their pockets to help out.

What goes around, comes around!

Quitable coaches part one: "We'll be back in a big way (this season)," says second year Melbourne Knights' boss Josip Biskic.

"We are working for a top six position first, then we will aim for a number one."

I would have thought winning any one game would be more of a concern than thinking about the big one for Joe and the Knights.

I'll have what he's having.

Quitable-coaches part two: "My job is to pick a winning side and it's up to the players how they handle it," declared new Carlton boss Stuart Munro when quizzed about the star quality players who missed Carlton's season opener in Auckland.

It's a tough school at Carlton these days.

Quitable coaches part three: "Why not? We won in Australia, we've won here, why not in Brazil?" was South Melbourne coach Ange Postecoglou's response to a question regarding his team's chances in the World Club Championships finals in Brazil next January, following the recent qualifying success in Fiji.

That's not like our usually understated 'Posti'; must have been a long and emotional flight home.

Just to put record straight, Newcastle veteran Andy Harper's late strike to help the Breakers' get a 2-2 result at Olympic in round one was his 93rd career NSL goal, not his 99th as reported in 'The Australian'.

After round one the six-club veteran needs seven goals and 26 more games to join the exclusive NSL club of 300 game, 100 goal players.

Only Marshall Soper, Rod Brown and John Markovski have previously achieved such a feat.

FOX: SOCCEROO THROUGH AND THROUGH

By Aidan Ormond

If you are looking for a future Socceroo captain look no further than Hayden Foxe. Not only is he destined to become one of our great defenders - something the UK press agreed on after his recent Olyroo performance against Southampton - but he positively exudes that old-fashioned Aussie spirit. Simply put, he lives for the green and gold and has the talent to match.

Foxe, currently playing for Hiroshima Sanfrecce in the J-League, first came to our attention in that memorable Olyroo Atlanta '96 qualifier against Canada at the SFS. As a raw-boned 18-year-old - very much the baby of that squad - he popped up to score a goal in front of a parochial 25,000 plus crowd, setting the scene for a 5-0 hiding of the plucky visitors.

The Aussie squad was loaded with stars.

"Mate," he said last week in Sydney, "it was nerve-wracking. At the time I was thinking only of Sydney 2000, so I was shocked when I got the call-up."

"Those guys in that side were my heroes, the Vidukas, Muscats, Chee Chee Mendez, but once I met them, again they were just typical Aussies who made me feel at home. They were so down-to-earth," he gushed.

Sadly for Mendez, that game was a

idea what Foxe was doing so far forward.

The feeling Foxe had for his nation (he recently called Australia "God's Country") has not diminished one iota in the intervening years, and his views on national team availability are crystal clear.

"Many players are different because of their attitudes and also their clubs and the schedules they have - I am having problems myself with that myself - but there is nothing better than coming home to play for Australia."

"It doesn't matter whether it's Fiji or Brazil, it's got to be ten times better than where you are. You're in with the lads and just putting on that green and gold shirt ... Aidan, there's nothing like it."

Foxe clearly harks back to the days when the shirt held more than a passing interest behind the avaricious nature of modern European football.

"I am still quite young but back a few years ago there was that fighting spirit," said Foxe in his strong Aussie accent.

"Now that our players are in Europe, maybe we are thinking we are better than we are?" he asked pointedly.

"Of course we have a strong side but maybe we have lost that fighting spirit. It's good to have a combination of skill players with those who have grit and determination and who work hard and get amongst it."

The elegant defender believes the appointment of new national coach Frank Farina, together with Graham Arnold, will imbue the LG Socceroos with that necessary grit in the lead-up to the 2002 qualifiers.

The Sydney-born youngster left Australia as a teenager (he had been at the AIS) to join one of the world's great football schools: Ajax Amsterdam. He spent about two years there and has nothing but high praise for it. Ironically, his current Olyroo teammate Jason Culina is now with Ajax (after a somewhat protracted transfer that had originally involved a Danish club.)

"I spoke with Jason when we were in camp with the Olyroos in England; he is loving Ajax. It's a great academy for young guys like Jason - it has everything and I can't speak highly enough of it."

However, Foxe's Dutch experiences weren't always good. The initial stages were very difficult for the teenager. "I went over at 17 and I was a nightmare, I was so homesick. If it wasn't for Graham Arnold (then at NAC Breda) I would have gone home. You always miss home but after a while you realize your job is where it is and you have to stay focussed on that."

Focussed he has been, and there is no better place than Japan to be fully focussed on playing football. Foxe has played these

last two years in the J-League, a league that only has been going for the past six years.

"It's improving no doubt. When I first arrived I was sceptical, but with the influx of foreign players and coaches it is getting better. It's still a step behind Europe, but not too far. I can't compare it to Australia because I haven't played in the NSL."

Foxe is well placed to analyze Japanese players; he feels they need to

move abroad to really improve.

Given their national team's disastrous wildcard entry into the Copa America, and France 98, he has a point. "There have been a few players who have gone overseas but largely they are content to stay home, earn good salaries and live with their families."

"For an Aussie it's perhaps not too difficult to move to Europe, but for them, it's a totally different culture," he noted.

So, what is the average day like for Hayden Foxe at his club in Japan? "Well, I get up about 8am and spend about half an hour on the Internet, reading my E-mails and the papers. We train between 10.30am and about 12.30pm. In the afternoon I just relax or go over to Poppa's (teammate and fellow Socceroo Tony Popovic) place to eat."

"Poppa's wife is an unbelievable cook. She cooks everything - steaks,

"It doesn't matter whether it's Fiji or Brazil, it's got to be ten times better than where you are. You're in with the lads and just putting on that green and gold shirt, Aidan, there's nothing like it."

Hayden Foxe

pasta, schnitzels. And she bakes these cakes that are just out of this world. Tony is a top guy and a champion player, and they are a wonderful couple who have been great to me."

"In the evening we watch Pay TV with about 30 different English channels, or we might go out for a game of ten pin bowling."



Hayden Foxe playing against Manchester United at Stadium Australia in July.

As for the Japanese ladies: "There isn't just one ... I am not ready to settle down yet!"

Hayden Foxe's contract with Hiroshima Sanfrecce is up next June, when he can leave on a free transfer. He feels he has had a useful spell in Japan but perhaps the time is right to move on.

"I am taking it as it comes. I've had my go in Japan - the club's been great. If they offer another contract well, let's see, but I am willing to go back to Europe," he said.

When the Olyroos recently played in England one of our coaching staff suggested to the local media that Foxe should be playing at Real Madrid.

He certainly would not look out of place at any major European club. But he will always have Australia in his heart and would like to come back to Australia before his career is over, to put back into the country and sport he loves so much.



Foxe heads clear of Julio Cesar of the FIFA World Stars against the Socceroos in June at Stadium Australia.

harbinger of things to come - he injured his knee and has struggled with his fitness ever since.

Yet the likeable Foxe's memories are nothing but fond. "I've never felt an atmosphere like it. And the goal, well, I can always remember it. The ball was played in from a corner, it broke and I was hanging outside the box, I got hold of it and shot for the bottom corner."

Coach Eddie Thomson (ironically his current club coach) later said he had no




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FALCONS SAVAGE BLUES

CARLTON 1 Marth pen. 73

GIPPSLAND FALCONS 1 Bell 77

Friday night at Olympic Park, Melbourne Crowd 3,105



By Kevin Christopher

Just over a month ago Carlton dished out a 3-0 hiding to Gippsland Falcons in the Tynan-Eyre Cup competition, but Falcons coach Jeff Hopkins showed he is a fast learner as his team overcame a distinct class disadvantage to earn a 1-1 draw with Carlton at Olympic Park on Friday night.

The home side had high hopes for the evening, coming off the back of an impressive 3-0 win in Auckland last weekend and were determined to put on a show for the paying punters. The off-field staff certainly did their job, providing the fans with Debbie Byrne, a beer garden behind the Swan St goal and the now traditional fireworks display.

Sadly, the on-field staff couldn't match their achievements as Gippsland, with virtually the same team that got dismantled at Epping in September, closed down the Blues' midfield with a mixture of aggression and

persistence that eventually paid a tidy dividend. Carlton opened impressively enough, forcing early free kicks in dangerous areas but they soon lost their composure as the gritty Falcons pressured them into wrong options.

Both sides were guilty of wasting possession and committing unnecessary fouls with the first twenty minutes littered with long balls and longer goal kicks, but

there were moments of genuine hope for both sets of supporters.

In particular the travelling fans would have been heartened by a sustained spell of forward thrusts midway through the half. It began when Andy Vargas tried his luck from long range and Dean Anastasiadis was forced to paw the ball away for a corner after it had taken an awkward bounce.

A minute later the visitors went closer, with Juan Nilo's flick sending Clayton Bell through on goal before his shot was deflected for another corner.

Bell was encouraged to try his luck from outside the penalty area as well but went narrowly wide, while Juan Nilo perhaps should have done better after being shown the way to goal via an excellent Vargas pass.

Nilo then returned the favour, setting Vargas clear but he too was guilty of not forcing Anastasiadis into a save.

Carlton went close in first half injury time when Stuart Slater, who had been well shackled to that point by Doug Marcina, dribbled around his marker and crossed invitingly for Andrew Marth whose powerful header flew straight at Bojo Jevdjovic.

The Blues' frontline of Alex Moreira and Mike Conroy lacked penetration with young Adrian Savage performing well at sweeper and even reminding the veteran Gotis of the benefits of pushing up toward the halfway line.

Moreira was also on the receiving end of a number of challenges from behind, two of which resulted in first half bookings for Manny Gotis and Dean Fak, while defender Craig Deans also needed treatment for a facial injury after tangling with Brian MacNicol.

The second half started poorly, with both sides struggling to find any rhythm or shooting accuracy, and when they did the goalkeepers were generally in command of the situation.

Andrew Packer replaced Moreira and injected some badly needed vitality to the frontline but it was Deans who forced Jevdjovic to smother a one-on-one opportunity after being released by the increasingly prominent Slater.

The match took on a new dimension with nineteen minutes remaining when Falcon midfielder John Hutchinson was adjudged to have handled the ball inside the box.

A visibly distraught Hutchinson then needed to be restrained by his teammates as he energetically appealed what appeared a harsh decision, but Andrew Marth showed no sympathy by coolly slotting the ball in the bottom corner.

Within five minutes the Falcons were level. Another cleverly weighted pass from the centre circle by Andy Vargas lured Dean Anastasiadis out to the corner of the 18-yard box but he was beaten to the ball by Clayton Bell who chipped the ball over him and into the net.



Lively Falcons striker Juan Nilo. His presence has boosted the side's attacking options.

The final five minutes saw perhaps the best chances of the match. Andrew Packer was first up but his shot from close range was blocked by midweek signing Peter Kakos, while Archie Thompson ran on to a searching pass by Lapsansky but fired straight at Jevdjovic who had spread himself well.

Then in injury time the Falcons almost stole all three points when another centre circle special from Vargas put Nilo

MATCH STATS

Carlton: Dean Anastasiadis; David McPherson, Craig Deans, Sean Douglas, Andrew Marth, Mark Atkinson, Stuart Slater (Archie Thompson 76), Lubo Lapsansky, Joe Tricarico (David Terminello 71), Mike Conroy, Alex Moreira (Andrew Packer 59)

Gippsland: Bojo Jevdjovic; Adrian Savage, Dean Fak, Manny Gotis, Robbie Puca, John Hutchinson (Will Hastie 79), Doug Marcina, Andy Vargas, Clayton Bell, Brian MacNicol (Peter Kakos 87), Juan Nilo

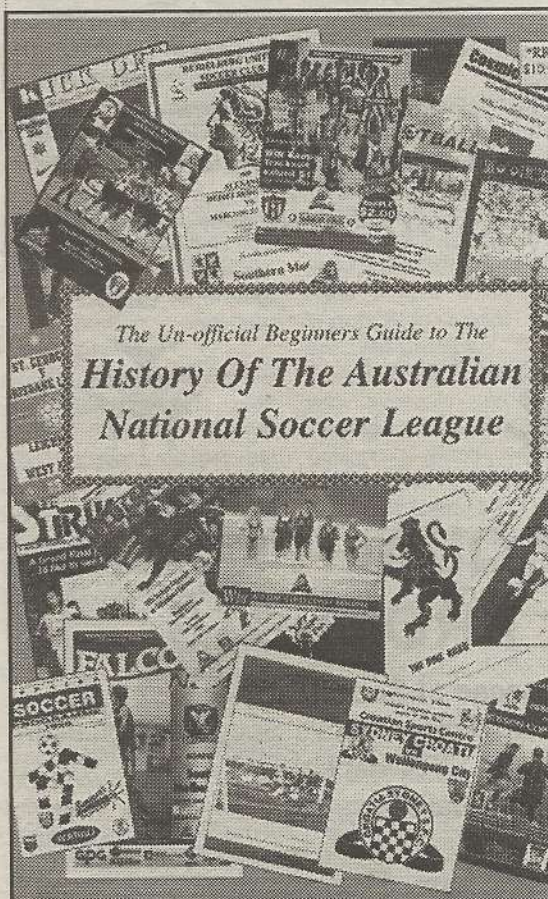
Yellows: Gippsland: Hutchinson 16, Gotis 37, Fak 40
Carlton: McPherson 44

Best Players:
3. ADRIAN SAVAGE
2. Andy Vargas
1. Bojo Jevdjovic

Referee: Jeremy Blaney

having the lion's share of possession against Perth last week, the Falcons have now proved beyond doubt that they will be more than just nuisance value in the coming weeks.

Stuart Munro on the other hand was disappointed that his team didn't suffi-



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Carlton keeper Dean Anastasiadis with coach Stuart Munro at the club's jersey presentation a few days before the Falcons game.

ciently impose themselves in a match of major importance to the club.

Having trained at Olympic Park on the Thursday night he didn't feel the unusually sandy surface was a problem, more a case of the ball not being on the ground enough!

One other factor may have been the Falcons players lifting themselves for a match against their old coach. With Carlton travelling to Marconi this week, it will be interesting to see if the Blues respond in a similar fashion.

Not convinced about the penalty decision, he was nonetheless pleased that his team got on with the game and showed the necessary character. After

Gippsland coach Jeff Hopkins was naturally thrilled after the match, enthusing over the performances of Adrian Savage at sweeper after Mehmet Durakovic was ruled out with a slight groin strain.

Not convinced about the penalty decision, he was nonetheless pleased that his team got on with the game and showed the necessary character. After

BLAGOJEVIC'S BLASTER!

PARRA POWER 2

Sterjovski 22 pen, Blagojevic 73

MELB. KNIGHTS 1

Vukadin 31

Friday night at Stadium Australia, Sydney Crowd (official) 7,286



Knights striker Ivan Kelic: the big guy came on as a late sub but did not make an impression on the scoreboard.

By Paul Goodwin

The sparse crowd at Stadium Australia got behind Parramatta Power as they surged towards their first win of their fledgling soccer life, the 2-1 victory coming against a more than capable Melbourne Knights.

The 'home' crowd made a lot of noise for so small a number of people, but while the attendance was extremely disappointing, the result was most pleasing for the club and its new found supporters.

It has to be said that the Knights were giving the locals much to think about, especially during the first half, before Mijo Trupkovic had to go off with a strained hamstring only a quarter of an hour into the game.

Ace marksman Ivan Kelic was already absent, having cut his mouth badly at work during the week and his coach did not want to risk him for more than the cameo appearance he eventually made in the last ten minutes.

With the lack of real fire power up front the Knights could not capitalise on a tigerish and creative midfield that lorded it over the Parramatta side until their legs gave out late in the second half.

Of the two keepers it was Power's Andrew Crews who was the busiest and if there was a criticism of his opposite number, Martin John, it could only have been for the way he set up his wall for the free kick from which Power snatched a barely deserved late winner.

Crews was called into action in the first minute, saving from a free kick around the edge of the box and from a corner soon afterwards he got down well to save from a stinging drive by Zeljko Susa.

Trupkovic was put through to face Crews in the tenth, but with Richard Plesa right on his back he managed to scoop the ball well over the bar.

Power began to make some progress after this, with Milan Blagojevic heading into the keeper's arms at the far post, from a free kick and Mile Sterjovski blasting over following some good lead up work involving Jacob Burns, Walter



Milan Blagojevic: his 'Roberto Carlos' style free-kick won the game for Power.

Ardone and Joel Griffiths after 20 minutes.

One minute later, to the surprise of many, Parramatta won a penalty when Ardone came down under the challenge of Jason Vukadin, referee Mark Shield at first appearing to wave away Ardone's appeals, but after casting a glance at his assistant on the line, pointing to the spot instead.

Under vehement protest from Knights' players the kick was taken and put away convincingly by Sterjovski, for the Power's early lead.

The Knights continued to look good going forward and after Michael Reda had failed to convince the referee of his own claims for a penalty, the Melbourne side soon afterwards won a corner on the right, at the half hour mark.

When the ball was delivered high to the far post, those at the near post seemed to perhaps get only a glancing, headed touch on it leaving the man at the far post with the opportunity to volley firmly past Crews and into the roof of the net.

And fittingly that man was Vukadin, who scored the equaliser to restore some equity to the game.

Two more chances came at the end of the half which stretched to 52 minutes thanks, perhaps, to delays caused by the issuing of five first half yellow cards, all to the Knights.

Reda advanced on goal after exchanging passes with substitute Paul Urlovic and when he pushed the ball a fraction too far ahead of him, as he prepared to strike, Crews seized the initiative by pushing the ball out of reach with both hands as he came off his line.

Defenders took a few moments to clear the ball to safety, but the danger had clearly passed.

At the other end Ardone almost got his side another goal when his long range shot just cleared the bar.

The second half saw Parramatta showing a little more urgency, but Sterjovski was still unable to penetrate, though there was an anxious moment for the Melbourne side, when a Michael Santalab header had to be cleared off the line by Dragi Nastevski, soon after the restart.

Blagojevic provided a taste of what was to come when, in the 55th minute, from a free kick 35 yards out, he rocked the crossbar with a superb shot.

After a smart move on the right Burns gave 'keeper John a scare when his downward header was claimed only after some nervous scrambling, but as time moved on the Knights lost some of their momentum and the free kicks and corners began to favour the Power.

In the 73rd Ardone again won a free kick just outside the area and Blagojevic stepped up to take it.

The wall was positioned by John, but the vastly experienced Power campaigner saw a chink beyond it and drove the ball with some wicked bend on it into the top right corner of the net.

A minute later Sterjovski failed to connect with a ball delivered in from the right by substitute Jon Angelucci and a near post ball from Steve Eagleton for Burns also saw the latter's effort beaten away by the keeper, all just moments after the side had scored what proved to be the winner.

Reda hit a shot low at the keeper for the Knights in the last minute and deep into stoppage time Ransford Banini raced into the area in an attempt to reach a ball which had spun off the boot of a defender, but keeper Crews managed to get in his touch fractionally in time to save his side's blushes.

Knights' coach Joe Biskic was happy with the way his side had played, thought

MATCH STATS



PARRAMATTA POWER: A Crews, R Plesa, J Vrkic, M Santalab, S Eagleton, P Bennett (D Townsend 60) W Ardone, J Burns (J Gibson 81), M Blagojevic, M Sterjovski, J Griffiths (J Angelucci 62)



MELBOURNE KNIGHTS: M John, J Rajher (B Vassallo 60), A Kovacevic, J Vukadin, M Silic, D Nastevski (I Kelic 80), M Trupkovic (P Urlovic 16), R Banini, R Vargas, Z Susa, M Reda

Yellow Cards: Michael Reda 3, Martin John 20, Ransford Banini 22, Rod Vargas 27, Mark Silic 43, Jason Vukadin 57 (all MK)

Best Player
3 MILAN BLAGOJEVIC
2 Walter Ardone
1 Ransford Banini

Referee: Mark Shield

the penalty decision was harsh, but did not dwell on the matter and praised Blagojevic rather than blaming his keeper for the winning goal.

David Mitchell, by contrast, was pleased to win the game, but unhappy with his team's lack of midfield dominance and sluggish effort up front.

He thought the Melbourne side had been good opponents and hoped his own side could learn an important lesson from the opposition's approach, namely to work harder in midfield to get better service to the front men for longer periods.

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INSIDE SOCCER

PETROVSKI'S LATE GOAL SEALS 2-2 DRAW



NEWCASTLE BREAKERS 2
 Pryce 35, Buonavoglia 53
WOLLONGONG CITY WOLVES 2
 Masi 39, Petrovski 87
 Friday night at Breakers Stadium, Newcastle. Crowd 6, 023



Saso Petrovski: his goal with just minutes left salvaged a point for the rejuvenated Wolves at Newcastle on Friday night.

able to somehow get a shot on a challenge with Catlin, and the looping header was well cleared by Glenn Sprod.

The Breakers had a prime opportunity to score in the 17th minute when a Wolves clearance found Breakers' Mark Wilson, who played a superb through ball to Johnny Buonavoglia. Buonavoglia seemed to have too much time and shot over the bar.

The Breakers hit the lead in the 35th minute when an in-swinging corner by Vasko Trpceviski found an unmarked Andy Harper at the far post. Harper's headed across goal and the resulting goalmouth scramble found captain Shane Pryce whose shot drove through a sea of bodies into the back of the net.

As was the case last week against Olympic, the young Breakers side lost concentration and allowed the Wolves back into the game through a terrible defensive error.

The normally reliable Pryce tried to shield the ball over the goalline for a goal kick but Wollongong's Scott Chipperfield was able to wrestle the ball away and Masi was left with a perfect opportunity to level the scoreline. He made no mistake.

The Breakers came back from the break fired up and it was not long before Buonavoglia was on the attack. Beating David Huxley, he put a through ball to Harper whose outside of the foot shot produced a finger tip save by Daniel Beltrame.

Minutes later it was Harper turning the provider when his flick header fell to the feet of Buonavoglia who side-footed the ball home much to the excitement of the home fans.

The Breakers were the more enterprising team at this stage when another through ball by Harper found the elusive



Wolves powerhouse midfielder Matt Horsley

Buonavoglia.

However, instead of crossing to substitute Peter Juchniewicz, Buonavoglia shot wide from a difficult angle.

It was Buonavoglia in the action again when he pounced on a mistake by George Souris. He passed to Harper whose shot was well saved by Beltrame.

Just as the Breakers seemed to have wrapped up the game, a late burst by the Wolves put the Breakers under pressure. A Neil Harlock free kick forced a double save from Catlin after the rebound fell to the feet of Masi.

With minutes to go Wollongong hit back when Petrovski produced an overhead kick out of nothing that looped over the head of Catlin. The Breakers were reeling from this shock and Paul Reid nearly gave the Wolves an unlikely victory when his header was saved by the ever reliable Catlin.

Breakers coach Lee Sterrey was left to lament on the team's inability to finish off opposing teams. "We played smart, controlled football but were punished by a couple of soft goals", he said.

"I don't know what it is, concentration or young brains, but it keeps happening whenever we score. We seem to relax and concede one.

"Wolves' pace up front and skill is their strong point, with Chipperfield as a breaking player from midfield, but tonight Andy Roberts marked him very well.

MATCH STATS



NEWCASTLE BREAKERS
 Catlin, Pryce, Roberts, McManus, Sprod, Dodd, Wilson, Buonavoglia, Owens (Angievski 84), Trpceviski (Juchniewicz 59), Harper.



WOLLONGONG WOLVES

Beltrame, Souris (Cervinski 69), Stanton, Horsley, Surjan (Reid 69), Chipperfield (Dimoski 81), Harlock, Spencer, Petrovski, Huxley, Masi.

Yellows

Breakers: Trpceviski 5, Pryce 74

Wolves: Chipperfield 12, Beltrame 34, Harlock 63, Cervinski 76

Best Players

3 GLENN SPROD (BREAKERS)

2 Esala Masi (Wolves)

1 Andy Harper (Breakers)

Referee: Simon Micallef

Wolves will be there when the chips are cracking at the end of the season.

"Harper destroyed them at the back with his dominance over all their defend-



Livewire Breaker John Buonavoglia had another good game for Newcastle.

By Michael Kmet

In a match that can no longer be called the "battle of the steel cities", the Newcastle Breakers hosted the Wollongong Wolves at Breakers Stadium on Friday night. A very healthy crowd of 6,023 witnessed a dour struggle in which no team gained the ascendancy and in which the Wolves stole a point through the brilliant overhead strike of Saso Petrovski late in the game.

The Breakers had to settle with two draws in as many weeks.

The Wolves started the game more industriously when a free kick by Neil Harlock was saved by Breakers custodian Bob Catlin.

Minutes later Fijian Esala Masi was



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ers. If they have a weakness, that's where it is, at the back.

"Generally I am very happy with our start to the season. We had an ordinary pre-season, so we will get better.

"Spirit this Friday? They are a hard side to beat. They always dominate with possession. Both Arnie and myself know a fair bit about each side because we are good mates and we chat a lot, so it's likely to be a cat and mouse game," added Sterrey.

The Breakers should, however, take many positives out of the game and through match practice look like a finals contender this year.

They are more creative than last year and the front pairing of Harper and Buonavoglia will cause opposing defences plenty of headaches. As usual the defence was solid with Pryce sure to bounce back from an uncharacteristically poor game.

PENALTY HAS FORCE FUMING



BRISBANE STRIKERS 2

Brain og 40, Foster 69.

ADELAIDE FORCE 1

Mori 20

Saturday night at Suncorp Metway Stadium, Brisbane. Crowd 4,147



Damien Mori: gave Strikers' central defender Stu McLaren problems all night and the replay suggests he should have been given a penalty in the 80th minute. Instead, the Force striker was given a yellow.

By Cameron Atfield

The Brisbane Strikers continued their good start to the NSL campaign with a controversial but entertaining 2-1 victory over Adelaide Force at Suncorp Metway Stadium on Saturday night.

A crucial decision by Sydney referee Matthew Breeze in the 80th minute left Force coach Zoran Matic fuming after the match.

Socceroo striker Damien Mori looked to have been brought down well inside the box by Strikers captain Stuart McLaren, and could feel hard-done-by that Breeze did not point to the spot. Instead, Mori was shown a yellow card for diving.

"We have so many young referees who are unable to make the tough decisions," an angry Matic said from the dressing rooms after the game.

"It is ridiculous - (Mori) gets tripped up in the box and earns a yellow card for his trouble. I will be making complaints about this," he said.

After what had to be the worst pre-match "entertainment" in the history of the game worldwide (some poor uncoordinated child waving signs around), the unfancied Strikers started the game strongly, taking six minutes for their first worthwhile attack on the Adelaide goal.

New boys David Pilic and Greg Di Losa linked up well in the midfield to cause the ageing Adelaide defence some headaches.

The rookies supplied the veteran front line of Peter Dwyer and Paul Foster with a few early opportunities, giving an early indication the Strikers lineup will not take long to gel into a coherent team.

Foster latched onto a Dwyer cross for the Strikers' first real shot of the game, which Force keeper Anthony Breden could only watch graze the right post.

Di Losa forced Breden into a magnificent save in the 18th minute when he headed on a Shane Stefanutto free kick.

Stefanutto fired in a kick from 30 metres out, brilliantly finding Di Losa in a crowded box. Breden did very well to tip the ball over the upright.

After a period of Strikers domination in the first 20 minutes, Adelaide Force broke the flow of the game by going ahead through a sloppy Damien Mori goal.

He caught Strikers keeper Clint Bolton out when he rounded him and tapped the ball towards an empty net. A desperate slide by Andrew Davidson was not enough to keep the ball out, and it was the visitors leading 1-0.

Adelaide went close to doubling their lead in the 36th minute after a Mori header from a Dong Ki Kim corner.

Bolton was again caught off his line, but this time it was left to Stefanutto to head the ball to safety off his own line.

The complexion of the game would again change just four minutes later, when the Strikers scored a lucky equaliser through a Louis Brain own goal.

Foster laid off the ball nicely to Harris, who in turn flicked it goalwards. The ball deflected off Brain and went past a despairing Breden.

Going into the break, it was Brisbane 1 - Adelaide 1.

The half-time entertainment came courtesy of the Brisbane River Festival fireworks display, which was a pleasant change from the pre-match farce.

The skies were still lit from millions of dollars worth of fireworks when the sides took to the field for the second half.

The fireworks were not confined to the heavens, as Harris and impressive Brazilian import Igor Rodrigues both contested the ball heavily. Harris earned a harsh booking for his effort.

The resulting Rodrigues free kick from 30 metres out sailed harmlessly over the bar, but served as a timely wake-up call for Bolton.

Angelo Costanzo went into the referee's book in the 62nd minute after what appeared to be an accidental handball outside the box.

Scottish veteran Dwyer took the kick, which went agonisingly close to the left upright.

A fly-by by an F1-11 with afterburners

blazing threatened to steal the show until the Strikers went ahead in the 69th minute, courtesy of former Hong Kong professional Foster.

Foster had the easiest of tap-ins after Breden could only parry Harris' shot into the path of Foster, giving the Strikers a well-deserved 2-1 lead.

A few minutes later in this pulsating match and it was again Bolton called into action.

Strikers captain Stuart McLaren had a bad night marking Mori, who turned him and advanced on a great solo run and shot on goal, which Bolton did well to save.

It was not long before the most contentious moment of the match - Mori's penalty claim in the 80th minute.

Once again, Mori got past McLaren and was heading goalwards before McLaren brought him down near the six-yard line.

The hearts of 4,147 people went into their throats when they heard the whistle, but their fears turned to cheers as Mori was booked for diving.

The Adelaide bench was justified in feeling angry about the decision after replays suggested a legitimate penalty claim.

Di Losa, after showing a lot of promise, came off in the 82nd minute with a hamstring injury, and was replaced by defender Matt Bell.

The Strikers had a golden opportunity in the 87th minute to put the game out of Adelaide's reach when Dwyer went one-on-one with the 'keeper.

Breden held his ground and Dwyer could only fire a shot into the keeper's legs. David Pilic's shot off the rebound sailed harmlessly over the bar.



Not much has really changed since I left," said Force Socceroo Aurelio Vidmar.

The Strikers held out the final few minutes for a hard-fought 2-1 victory.

Brisbane coach John Kosmina was happy with the result, but said the team still had a long way to go if they were to make an impact in the competition.

MATCH STATS

BRISBANE STRIKERS



1. Clint Bolton, 2. Glenn Gwynne, 3. Shane Stefanutto, 4. Andrew Davidson, 6. Brad Ditton, 8. David Pilic, 9. Paul Foster, 11. Greg Di Losa (5. Matt Bell 82'), 12. Peter Dwyer, 13. Stuart McLaren, 17. Jeromy Harris (19. Wade Baldwin 75')



ADELAIDE FORCE

20. Anthony Breden, 4. Milan Ivanovic, 5. Alex Tobin, 7. Damien Mori, 9. Nick Sabljak, 10. Aurelio Vidmar, 11. Igor Rodrigues (8. Carl Veart 75'), 12. Nathan Day, 15. Louis Brain, 17. Angelo Costanzo, 21. Dong Ki Kim

Yellows:

Brisbane - Jeromy Harris 52'
Adelaide - Angelo Costanzo 62', Damien Mori 80'

Best Players:

1. JEROMY HARRIS (STRIKERS)
2. Brad Ditton (Strikers)
3. Igor Rodrigues (Force)

Referee: Matthew Breeze

"We still need to get our basics fixed up," he said.

"A lot of these guys have been playing XXXX League and there is a definite jump in class to National League level."

Kosmina singled out Di Losa for mention.

"Di Losa still needs more games at this level before he can really be of NSL standard," he said.

"I'm happy with his progress so far. He just needs some time and he will be all class."

Kosmina also had some words to say about missing striker Wayne Knipe.

"The last I heard he was somewhere in Belgium somewhere looking for a club," he said.

"But I can tell you one thing now - whether or not he makes it over there, he won't be playing again for the Strikers. There's a right way and a wrong way to go about it, and he's gone the wrong way."

Zoran Matic said his side had showed improvement since the previous week's loss to Canberra.

"The players definitely lifted tonight," he said.

"We dominated the game, scored two goals, and still we lose."

Socceroo Aurelio Vidmar, who played only his second game since returning to Australia from a long stint overseas, said he was still trying to find his feet.

"Not much has really changed since I left," he said.

"The skill levels aren't much different, but it will take a while for me to get used to the new team and new surroundings."

In the earlier match, Gold Coast City took out the Queensland Cup when they beat Taringa Rovers 3-1 in the final.

Peter Grierson, Adam Evans and Brett Adams all scored for the Gamblers. Taringa's only consolation came from a first half goal by Scott Robertson.

KINGZ MISS PENALTY FOR SECOND WEEK

SYDNEY UNITED 2 Jerman 19, 46
FOOTBALL KINGZ 1 de Jong 34

Sunday afternoon at Edensor Park, Sydney. Crowd 3, 136



MATCH STATS

SYDNEY UNITED: John Crawley, Ray Younis, Velimir Kupresak, Eddy Bosnar, Vince Savocca, Nahuel Arrarte, Mario Jerman (Ante Deak 90), Ante Moric, Tom Pondeljak, Matthew Zec (Kain Rastall 63), Joe Moric.



AUCKLAND KINGZ: Mike Utting, Che Bunce, Riki Van Steeden (David Moya 71), Jonathan Perry, Chris Jackson (Marcus Stergiopoulos 70), Fred de Jong, Dino Mennillo, Robbie Middleby, Harry Ngata, Levent Osman, Aaron Silva (Ivan Vicolich 76)

Yellows:

Jackson (Auckland Kingz) 29'
Savocca (Sydney United) 60'
Jerman (Sydney United) 62'
Bosnar (Sydney United) 90'

Best Player

3: Mario Jerman (Sydney United)
2: Tom Pondeljak (Sydney United)
1: Jonathan Perry (Auckland Kingz)

Referee: Brett Hugo

Kicking off, the ball found its way through Matthew Zec and Tom Pondeljak, whose ball to the left of the park somehow found Joe Moric in acres of space.

His cross was met nicely by Mario Jerman, United's scorer in the first half, with a low volley which gave Mike Utting in the Auckland Kingz goal no chance and his team a lead they would not surrender.

The goal came before a Kingz player had touched the ball in the second period.

The second incident came after the 90 minutes were up, and should have seen the visitors come away with a point they would not have deserved.

This time Joe Moric was the villain, as a move that saw Dino Mennillo's cross either missed or superbly left by Fred de Jong, back in the NSL after a nine year absence, fall to Harry Ngata. After a poor game Ngata looked like he was going to get his team on level terms, but before he could get his shot in he was untidily bundled off the ball from behind by Moric.

Referee Brett Hugo took his time in awarding the kick, but eventually did so, waving away the protests from the home players.

Auckland had missed a penalty against Carlton the week before, although the offender on that occasion, Chris Jackson, had already left the field. That saw Levent Osman step up in understandably nervous fashion, with the chance to snatch his team a point – not only their first of the 1999-2000 season but also their first ever.

Instead, history will show that Sydney United's goalkeeper John Crawley saved the kick, although so poorly taken was it that Crawley's dive left him waiting for the ball to reach him which it did – just.

A bumpy pitch and players new to the NSL meant the skills on show were not for the connoisseur, but on a sticky day in Sydney, both teams provided entertainment right until the death.

The first half was a strange affair, as Sydney United looked by far the better side until they scored, then the Kingz got on top and bossed the rest of the first period.

In fact, given the way the half went it seemed the Kingz could well go on and win the game in the second period, although any plans to resume where they had left off were demolished with Jerman's second goal of the afternoon.

It was a slow start to the game with Sydney United looking the more solid of the teams, Eddy Bosnar coming forward for the first real effort after 12 minutes for United but firing wide. United appear to have a player for the future in impressive Nahuel Arrarte, and he hit a half-volley which landed on top of the goal just four minutes after Bosnar's strike.

With favourite Velimir Kupresak looking as solid as ever at the back the home team had a good platform to work from, and took the lead after 19 minutes. Utting



Kingz midfielder Dino Mennillo scoots away from United's makeshift defender Ray Younis.

had already been given a few nervous moments by back-passes from left-back Riki Van Steeden, but could do nothing when Jerman flashed a header in from a great cross by Arrarte.

It was a great header after Ante Moric found Arrarte on the right hand side of the field, but the goalscorer owed much to the youngster whose cross was early and whipped in with pace.

That seemed to lift the Kingz into life though, and on 25 minutes Ngata struggled to dig the ball out from under his feet when well placed – and when he did so Crawley was able to block the shot.

A minute later Robbie Middleby found de Jong, who looked composed all game, but his header flashed wide.

On the half-hour mark one of the Kingz' best, Chris Jackson, burst into the penalty area only to be apparently impeded by Kupresak.

Referee Hugo quickly blew his whistle – but gave United a free kick and booked Jackson for diving. It did appear that there was contact between the play-

quickly got up to smother the rebound from Ante Moric.

After its dramatic start the second half belonged to the home side, with Pondeljak looking more and more impressive as he moved forward after the substitution of Zec.

United couldn't grab that third goal though, although Pondeljak did curl one just wide on the 90th minute. It looked to be the end of the game before that dramatic last-gasp penalty and the confrontation between Crawley and Osman – a bout won by Crawley with a blow that knocked out both Osman and the Kingz. Like all good fighters though, they will bounce back.

Kingz coach Winton Rufer was understandably disappointed that his team hadn't snatched a draw at the death, saying that his team had missed two penalties in two matches and "our luck had to change."

"There's 32 games to go though...I am confident the boys will string some surprises together."



The indefatigable Fred de Jong. Scored the first goal ever for the Kingz.

By Mark Fowler

Two incidents at the start and end of the second half settled this clash at Sydney United Sports Centre – and gave Sydney United their first win of the season.

An even first half saw the teams go in at the break locked at 1-1, but just 18 seconds into the second period Sydney United got back on top.



The Kingz line up for their first game in Australia. It ended in a 2-1 loss to Sydney United.

ers and it would have been no surprise to see a penalty being awarded, although Hugo was in excellent position.

Auckland were really getting back into the game and Bosnar headed a cross almost out of Crawley's hands as the United player struggled to clear their lines, and from the resulting corner de Jong leveled the scores.

The ball was whipped in by Dino Mennillo, and such was its quality that any touch was going to result in a goal. That touch was provided by the Kingz big number 9, who got a faint touch as the ball whizzed into the net.

The impressive Jonathan Perry then came forward from the back only to fire wide, but just before the break Utting did well after spilling a Pondeljak strike as he

Rufer admitted his defence hadn't looked solid, although given the team's lack of quality opposition in pre-season that was hardly surprising.

Sydney United's David Ratcliffe looked relaxed after the game, and also admitted that his team had struggled in defence, although in their case actually getting a defence together!

A number of injuries already has caused Ratcliffe to piece together a makeshift defence, with the attacking player Ray Younis playing right full-back.

Ratcliffe thought his team would, "make it hard for people," and said he thought that the first six weeks were always going to be the toughest for his team.

*ALL PICS BY JOE PALOS

CHAMPS WIN BUT POSTI SLAMS MEDIA

SOUTH MELBOURNE 2 Curcija 16, 47
NORTHERN SPIRIT 0

Sunday afternoon at Bob Jane Stadium, Melbourne. Crowd 6,917



MATCH STATS



SOUTH MELBOURNE:

Chris Jones, Steve Iosifidis, Con Blatsis, Robert Liparoti, Fausto De Amicis, Goran Lozanovski (George Goutzioulis 55), David Clarkson, Steve

Panopoulos, Paul Trimboli (c), Vaughan Coveny, Michael Curcija (Anthony Magnacca 64). Sub not used: Nick Orlie.



NORTHERN SPIRIT:

Paul Henderson, Mark Rudan, Matthew Bingley, Luke Casserly, Matthew Langdon, Troy Cranney, Ian Crook

(Michael Cunico 63), Paul Bilokapic (Simon Catanzaro 72), Robbie Slater, Clayton Zane, David Seal. Sub not used: Phil Moss.

Yellows:

Spirit: Bingley (11), Crook (36),

Langdon (60), Rudan (79)

South: Blatsis (18), Clarkson (66).

BEST PLAYERS:

3: David Clarkson (South)

2: Michael Curcija (South)

1: Matt Langdon (Spirit)

Referee: Wayne Dade.

By Alan Clark

South Melbourne emerged with the three points on offer in an entertaining and skilful display of football at Bob Jane when it met Northern Spirit on Sunday.

Home coach Ange Postecoglou was happy with the win, but angrily denounced the Melbourne mainstream media for its lack of focus on the match: "I've got to get something off my chest. I'm not at all happy with the coverage we've been getting, and particularly this week.

"You had a game between two of the top teams in this country, packed with internationals, a good open game, and all I've been reading about all week - the most important thing in Victorian soccer - has been a bloody beer-garden.

"When are we going to get the recognition we deserve? This team has been on top for two years. We've only lost one game (at home) in the last two years. I'm flying to Brazil next week (for the World Club Championship draw) because we're one of eight teams in the world. It's about time this group of players got the recognition they deserve."

Whether the media give that recognition, the football enthusiast would certainly embrace a league where such fare is standard rather than exceptional.

These two sides seem destined to

meet for higher stakes than just three league points, and were this year's Grand Final to be graced with such an open and positive game, the seats would be worth booking now.

Both teams were committed to playing attacking football, a point Spirit coach Graham Arnold made after the match: "I'm disappointed because I thought we played very well. I'm never going to coach a team to come down here and sit ten at the back and close the game out.

"Football today was the winner, because I thought it was a very high-standard game, and by far the best standard game this season. Not many teams create (as many) chances (as we did) against South Melbourne. We should have capitalised more on the chances we had."

South Melbourne braved some significant early pressure from the visitors, mostly delivered through hard-running left-winger Matthew Langdon who was ill-rewarded for his industry.

Chris Jones - South's deputy goal-keeper during the reign of Michael Petkovic - once again had his chance in the team through the unavailability of new signing Milan Udvaracz, and was set the harder test of the two goalkeepers. Ian Crook, David Seal, and Clayton Zane all had early chances, but it was South's Olyroo Michael Curcija who opened the scoring just after the quarter-hour.

South Melbourne has played a possession-based short-passing game for a number of years - high risk if lesser quality players turn the ball over without making progress - but high reward when it comes off as it did here.

Starting with a long ball from Jones' goal-kick, Northern Spirit managed only one clear touch in a flowing South move-ment that involved seven South players, exchanging thirteen passes and holding off four serious Spirit challenges which could have broken the movement. Towards the end of the sequence, Con Blatsis, David Clarkson, and then Goran Lozanovski crisply moved the ball forward to Paul Trimboli, now in an inside right position and 40 metres out.

Trimboli saw Curcija making a run to his left and lofted a pass which just cleared Spirit's tall central defenders Mark Rudan and Luke Casserly. Curcija still needed to control the ball before shooting past the hapless Paul Henderson.

One goal was never going to settle the game, such was the endeavour of both sets of players.

Spirit in fact continued to look the more dangerous, and Langdon was exploiting the space behind Lozanovski caused by Lozanovski's requirement to link with the attacks.



Michael Curcija's double a timely reminder to Olyroo coach Raul Blanco.

What Langdon was managing down the left, Robbie Slater was down the right, more closely marshalled by Fausto De Amicis as De Amicis was less critical to South's attacking moves.

It was therefore yet another cruel chapter in the book of football when South grabbed a second, just two minutes into the second half.

Once again, it was to come from South's neat quick passing. Trimboli played though to Curcija who had his back to goal and set up Steve Panopoulos. Panopoulos played a neat one-two with Trimboli on the edge of the area, bursting through a square Spirit back-line from a well on-side position despite the claims of the static defence.

By now Panopoulos was clean through on Henderson, and had support behind and to his right from Curcija and Vaughan Coveny. Curcija was given the ball and side-footed home with Coveny involved in a territorial battle with Henderson attempting, but failing, to get the final touch as the ball crossed the line.

Once again, it was Spirit that had the chances to follow. Slater showed his trickery on the ball with a run down the right before feeding Ian Crook who laid off for Zane's blast over.

Langdon, not to be outshone by his opposite winger, launched another mazy run down the left and then moved inside to shoot, required the very best of Jones' skills to block.

"(Jones) did very well for us," said Postecoglou after the match. "He's a good goalkeeper, and he's waited for his chance. He pulled off one very good save from Langdon when he was through, and if he didn't do that, there would have been a closer end (to the game)."

"I thought we created some good chances and that we played very well," said Postecoglou.



"... all I have been reading about all week - the most important thing in Victorian Soccer soccer - is a bloody beer garden," said a furious Ange Postecoglou after South beat Spirit 2-0 at fortress Lakeside.

BAILLIE'S LATE GOAL SINKS COSMOS



**CANBERRA COSMOS 0
SYDNEY OLYMPIC 1** Baillie 84

Sunday afternoon at Bruce Stadium, Canberra. Crowd 4,335



Happy with the three points: Olympic coach Branko Culina.

By Dylan Durie

Sydney Olympic ground out a tough 1-0 win over the Canberra Cosmos thanks to a late Scott Baillie goal at Bruce Stadium on Sunday.

In a game that was more notable for sloppy passing and mis-timed tackles than skill or entertainment, Baillie popped up in the 86th minute to head home a Marcus Phillips free kick and snatch the points.

In wet conditions neither side played very well and 0-0 looked a fair result until Baillie's goal set the Cosmos frantically chasing an equaliser for the final few minutes.

It was Olympic that settled into the game quickest and could have gone

ahead in the 13th minute when a deep cross from Brett Emerton found Chris Kalantzis unmarked at the far post but his header was narrowly off target.

Just a minute later Baillie flashed a dangerous shot just across the Cosmos goal after latching on to a punch from debutante keeper Angelo Konstantinou.

Pablo Cardozo then failed to hit the target from close range after Ante Juric made a storming run into the box and passed to Kalantzis who helped the ball on to Cardozo at the far post.

Then a bizarre refereeing mistake ruined what was probably the best chance of the first half. Robbie Hooker clattered in to his opponent as the ball was played to Peter Zorbas, giving him a clear run at goal.

As referee David Dwight waved play on with his hands he accidentally gave a short blast on his whistle which caused Zorbas to stop. Seeing this, Dwight stopped play and booked Hooker.

Olympic had dominated the first 25 minutes but the Cosmos fought back and had the best of the play until half time. Glen Kolpak had their first sniff of a chance when he narrowly missed getting his head to a lovely curling cross by Jason Polak.

Harry James then took control of a bouncing ball in the Olympic penalty area but his shot on the turn was blocked well. James headed over from the resulting corner.

By half time there had still been no clear chances, and the creative players were struggling to find room in an overcrowded midfield.

It was Cosmos defender Danny Burt that had the first chance of the second period when a deep ball from the right by Polak found him charging unmarked toward the far post. The ball cannoned wide off his shins in the wet conditions when perhaps he should have done better.

A minute later a Polak free kick was headed on into the area and James found room in the six yard box with his back to goal. He nodded the ball back to Watkins who headed over.

The Cosmos had come out stronger in the second half and continued to make all the chances with Alex Castro and Gaby Gonzalez having an impact on the game.

In the 53rd minute Castro had a good chance after dispossessing an Olympic midfielder and charging in to the box to receive a one-two. He took too long with his shot and it was easily blocked.

Gonzalez then had a sight of goal when James won a tackle in midfield and the Cosmos found themselves with men over. James ran at the defence and laid the ball square to Gonzalez who blasted over from a reasonable position.

Gonzalez then had the Cosmos best chance of the entire game when he dribbled past two defenders to get into the area, but his finish with only the keeper to beat lacked venom and was easily saved.

Olympic eventually saw off the spirited Cosmos charge but were unable to mount any serious pressure themselves.

The game appeared to be petering to a tame draw when Nick Carle (right) burst through the Canberra defence and passed to Peter Zorbas whose shot was only just deflected wide by Konstantinou.

The Cosmos gave away a free kick as Olympic worked a short corner and Baillie took advantage of some slack marking to win the game for the visitors.

Victorious Olympic coach Branko Culina was pleased his side was able to pick up its first win of the season despite not playing particularly well away from home.

He cited the team's patience and ability to absorb pressure that allowed them to come out on top.

"The three points will come in very handy," he said. "Considering we didn't really play some great stuff we still created a few chances and probably, in the end, deserved it."

Culina then revealed he thought shutting down Jason Polak had been the key to beating the Cosmos. Gabriel Mendez was given a tight role on Polak

MATCH STATS

COSMOS: (3-5-2)

Konstantinou, Popovich, Burt (Milin 79), Polak, Watkins, Castro, Arranz, James (De Jesus 70), Kolpak, Hooker, Gonzalez.

Gonzalez.

Sub not used: Prenzoski

OLYMPIC: (4-4-2) Kourtis, Tsekenis, Baillie, Juric, Phillips, Cardozo, Emerton, Kalantzis (Cervinski 70), Mendez (Carle 62), Wilson, Zorbas.

Sub not used: Sinozic

Yellows:

Cosmos: Hooker 18, James 55.

Olympic: Tsekenis 29, Cardozo 42, Emerton 51, Carle 69, Kourtis 90.

Referee: David Dwight

Best Player

3: Gabriel Gonzales (Cosmos)

2: Scott Baillie (Olympic)

1: Pablo Cardozo (Olympic)



Nick Carle: a late sub for Olympic.

and didn't let his coach down as the spritely playmaker failed to influence the game

Cosmos coach Tom Sermanni was disappointed by the result and blamed it simple on a lack of concentration towards the end.

"It is the small things that can end up either winning you the game or costing you the game," Sermanni lamented.

"We defended poorly down by the corner flag, giving away an unnecessary free kick, and then being unorganised which led to their opportunity."

Sermanni summed up the game perfectly for the crowd when he said "It had all the hallmarks of a nil-all draw."

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SIX GOAL THRILLER IN PERTH

PERTH GLORY 3 Ergic 10, Despotovski 57, Boutsianis 67
MARCONI STALLIONS 3 S. Babic 23, 75, Gibson 46

Sunday afternoon at Perth Oval, Perth. Crowd 16, 176



Chad Gibson: was booked for an unusual celebration after his goal for Marconi.

By Jack Warner

This was the eighth meeting between these two teams and Marconi still have yet to beat the team from Perth, this 3-3 draw being the fourth drawn game in a row at Perth Oval between the teams.

The game was played in the usual packed stadium, Marconi are always a big drawcard, and it was the first home game of the season and of course expectations are high due to the successes of last sea-

son.

The pitch was in excellent condition and the weather was perfect for football.

The first half proved very lacklustre though Marconi made their intentions clear when only seconds after kick-off a crunching tackle went in on Despotovski.

Shortly afterwards, the Perth number 10 won the ball from Kim in the far corner but his cross was cut out by Aceski in the Stallions goal.

Glory's suspect defence came through it's first test in the 6th minute and the danger was cleared and then a promising Zeljko Babic run came to an end when he lost the ball on the edge of the Glory area.

Play immediately swept to the other end of the ground and Halpin put the ball through to Despotovski who clashed with Aceski and the loose ball fell to Ergic who slotted the ball home for his first NSL goal.

The first corner of the game came in the 12th minute and it went to the Perth side. Halpin sent over the cross and the incoming header was cleared from under the bar by a Marconi defender.

Zeljko Babic was having a great game but earned himself a yellow card for pulling back Ergic. The free-kick specialist Boutsianis stepped up and his dipping free-kick was going under the bar but was comfortably held by the Stallions young 'keeper.

The game was starting to

lose its way and becoming a midfield struggle with Marconi relying on the long punt upfield for Trajanovski and Babic to chase and put the inexperienced Glory defence under pressure.

Their tactics finally paid off when a mix-up at the back gave Zeljko Babic a simple tap-in to equalise.

On the half hour a total mis-kick by the usual reliable Franken went to Trajanovski who gleefully fired in a shot which Trajanovski cleared off the line.

Although some very strong tackles were going in the ref mostly let them go unpunished. But Halpin deservedly ended up in Mr. Connolly's notebook for scything down Kim from behind whilst the Korean was in full flight down the left wing.

Miss of the game must surely go to Bobby Despotovski after Ergic had jinked past three or four players and sent in a perfect cross which Despotovski inexcusably headed well wide of the target.

The half ended with the score 1-1 with Glory probably just shading their opponents and Eddie Krncevic happy to be going in on level terms.

Glory are renowned for scoring early at home but were totally caught out from the restart when Gibson crossed a free-kick which Franken could only palm into his own net.

Gibson was then booked for an amusing over-elaborate goal-scoring celebration.

After taking the lead Marconi tightened up defensively and Glory seemed at a loss on how to break them down, seeming content to try through the middle when the better option appeared to be on the flanks.

In the 53rd minute Despotovski was brought down from behind and the ref waved play-on much to the wrath of the partisan home crowd.

However the Glory striker found himself on the scoresheet shortly with an almost identical copy of their first goal, this time Ergic doing the work and Despotovski hitting the ball home.

He really should have had another goal after Boutsianis found him in the area with an inch perfect pass and with the goal at his mercy the Glory number 10 snuffed his shot completely.

It was all Glory pressure now and this half more than made up for the fare served up in the first 45 minutes. Glory's endeavour finally paid off in the 69th minute when Boutsianis got past two defenders, nutmegging one of them, and his low cross took a wicked deflection and ended up in the back of the net, the referee awarding the goal to Boutsianis.

The final 20 minutes of the half saw a number of substitutions made by both coaches. Krncevic brought on Farah and Marchesini and Stange responded by replacing Miller with Carbone.

The "Shed" were very vocal by now and the chants of "We're gonna win the league" were cut short when Zeljko Babic received the ball in the Glory penalty area, controlled, turned and drilled home the ball past Franken.

The final 10 minutes saw more new faces and fresh legs, Care for Marconi and Thorpe and Naven for the Glory. The replacements were responsible for a frantic finish with both teams looking to take home the three points. The closest to a winner come from Edgar, the Glory player

Match Stats



Perth Glory

Franken, Trajkovski, Harnwell, Miller (Carbone 73), Halpin (Naven 80), Edwards, Despotovski (Thorpe 90+), Valle, Edgar, Boutsianis, Ergic



Stallions

Aceski, Gibson, M. Babic, Kim, McDonald, Z. Babic, Smith (Care 83), Invincible, Renaud, Trajanovski (Marchesini 74), Zoric (Farah 71)

Yellows

Glory Halpin 34
 Stallions Z. Babic 14 Smith 30 Gibson 46

Corriers: Glory 7 Stallions 3

Crowd 16,176

Referee Gerry Connolly

BEST PLAYER

3 ERGIC PG
 2 Z Babic MS
 1 Boutsianis PG



Glory coaching staff of Stange and D'avray

seeing his 20m shot just skim over the Marconi crossbar.

At the post match conference Bernd Stange said "if you score three goals at home you really should take the three points" but he was happy with the spirit and attitude of his team at coming back from 2-1 down but says he needs another defender.

His players were full of running but are a long way from matching last season's team.

Eddie Krncevic said "it was a game of defensive errors but before the game he would have been happy with a point". He was pleased with his players' effort and is impressed by Glory, "they have a good coach, team and fans" he said.

Ivan Ergic in his first home game said he was impressed by playing in front of such a large crowd and was looking forward to the next home game.



Bobby Despotovski: scored again for Glory.

Ram

NATIONAL
YOUTH LEAGUE

Christian Zelvis ... part of winning Wollongong team

Parramatta Power 5 - ACTAS 0

Parramatta Power's youth team crushed the ACT Academy of Sport by five goals to nil at Stadium Australia on Friday evening. After just two rounds of NYL action, the Power have scored 11 goals and conceded none, signalling that they will be a major force in the competition this year.

The handful of spectators who arrived early at the vast, echoing stadium saw Parramatta seize the initiative straight from the opening whistle.

Power trainee Matt Thompson grazed the bar with a header in the 2nd minute, and senior player Steve Berry fired a shot just wide shortly afterwards. The ACT boys took a while to settle, although the skillful work of forward Daniel Aliffi engineered a few half-chances for the team in red.

Parramatta opened the scoring in the 35th minute, when a long throw into the penalty box from Paul Downs slipped through the gloves of ACT 'keeper Rade Kosanovic. Patrick Gatt was on hand to drive the loose ball into the net, becoming the first player to score for an Australian soccer club at Stadium Australia.

Thompson doubled the lead four minutes into the second half, after Power forward Danny Kukucka stole the ball from the ACT's Steve Kemp and set him up for a tap-in. The ACTAS showed some fighting spirit, though. Ilja Prenzowski tested Parramatta 'keeper Barney Smith with a dipping thirty yard shot in the 55th minute and the tricky Aliffi also came close.

An in-swinging corner from Ahmed Elrich allowed Gatt to whack home a header in the 59th minute, making the scoreline 3-0 to the Power. It was all Parramatta at

this stage, with first grade veteran Steve Berry guiding his younger team-mates from midfield. Danny Kukucka and Lachlan Campbell harassed the ACT defence, drawing a number of reflex saves from Kosanovic.

ACT substitute Goran Veljanovski seemed certain to score when he broke free of his marker in the 80th minute, but a desperate lunge from Power defender Scott Dixon deflected the ball just wide. The team from the capital manufactured a few good passages of midfield play towards the end of the game, only to be let down on each occasion by wayward finishing.

Ahmed Elrich scored a well-earned goal for the Power in the 86th minute. Berry lifted the ball over a knot of ACT defenders and the nimble winger raced into the box and smashed a volley past Kosanovic.

The same player capped a man-of-the-match performance with another classy goal in stoppage time at the end of the game. Elrich received the ball on the right, cut inside, waltzed around a couple of players and slotted a low shot under Kosanovic to make the final score 5-0.

Best for the ACTAS were Aliffi, fellow forward Paul Ivanic, Aidan Griffiths and Steve Kemp. For the Power, wide midfielder Elrich, polished defender Mark Byrnes and Danny Kukucka stood out.

Young players such as John Kelso, Pat Gatt and Scott Dixon have moved to the National Youth League this season from NSW Super League clubs and seem to be rising to the challenge of the tougher competition.

Parramatta Power: Barney Smith, Steve Berry, John Kelso, Mark Byrnes, Patrick Gatt, Scott Dixon, Ahmed Elrich, Matt Thompson, Danny Kukucka, Paul Downs, Lachlan Campbell. Subs: Ismael Arrate, Danny Cabrera, Lachlan Wright, Dwayne Dearson.

ACT Academy: Rade Kosanovic, Adam Williams, Aidan Griffiths, Dom Labutte, Phil Yarnold, Elliot Zwangobani, Steve Kemp, Ilja Prenzowski, Daniel Aliffi, Nick Mrdja, Paul Ivanic. Subs: Matt Julianne, Rohan Coleman, Amied Shadmann, Goran Veljanovski, Steve Craig.

AIS v Marconi Colts

The Australian Institute of Sport found it tough going in their re-arranged Saturday evening fixture at the AIS soccer grounds despite scoring a 6-0 win over a willing Marconi Colts team.

Marconi's goalkeeper, Daniel Schwarzer was kept busy throughout the

match and saved his team on a number of occasions which could have seen the final result in double figures if not for his heroics. At the other end of the ground, AIS 'keeper Michael Turnbull was rarely troubled.

All of the AIS's goals came from different players: Kevo Gulesserian, Josh Kennedy, Danny Vasilevski, John Cvetanoski, Todd Brodie and captain Grant Last. Cvetanoski could easily have had a double except for a fine save by Schwarzer who stopped a point blank piledriver midway through the second half.

The result keeps the AIS' unbeaten record intact so far but they will face a sterner test next Saturday when they play Sydney United at the AIS at 7.00pm. The AIS's Joey's contingent of Jade North, Wayne Srhoj, Josh Kennedy and Lucas Pantelis left on Sunday and will not be back playing for the AIS until late November at the earliest.

N'castle Breakers v W'gong Wolves

In a match that was in no way reflected by the scoreline, the Wollongong Wolves must be counting their blessings after beating the Newcastle Breakers 1-0 at Breakers Stadium.

It was a game in which the Breakers dominated and should have won, but fine goalkeeping by Leslie Pogliacomini and the consistent squandering of excellent chances by the Breakers was enough to see the Wolves sneak back to Illawarra with the three points.

The first half saw the Breakers do much of the attacking down their right flank with Heath Simpson and David Ross providing quality service to the attacking duo of Chad Mansley and Chris Tanchevski.

Twenty minutes into the second period a half volley by Chad Mansley was miraculously saved by Pogliacomini, who initiated a quick return up field. From the ensuing break away and a goal mouth scramble Wollongong's Daniel Aldridge was able to slot the ball away for the winner.

The rest of the game petered away as the Wolves were happy to stack their defence, and the Breakers ran out of options and creativity.

JOEYS WORLD CUP
SQUAD SELECTED

The Australian Under-17 Soccer Team has embarked on a month long tour of South America before it's campaign at the World Youth Soccer Championship in New Zealand in November.

The 19-man Joeys Squad will play both the Uruguayan and Argentine National Under-17 teams as well as local Club teams, before heading for Christchurch for their first group game of the World Cup against Brazil on November 12.

The Squad is:

PLAYER	CLUB
BRAIN Louis	Adelaide Force (Australia)
BYRNES Mark	Parramatta Power (Australia)
CANSELL-SHERRIFF Sharie	Leeds United (UK)
DI IORIO Joe	Werder Bremen (Germany)
DOUMANIS Anthony	NSWIS (Australia)
FYFE Iain	SASI (Australia)
GOULDING Aaron	SASI (Australia)
GROVES Bradley	Leeds United (UK)
JOHNSON James	QAS (Australia)
KENNEDY Joshua	AIS/Carlton SC (Australia)
LOCKHART Shane	NSWIS (Australia)
MACALLISTER Dylan	Sydney Olympic (Australia)
MADESCHI Adrian	Atalanta Bergamo (Italy)
MCDONALD Scott	VIS (Australia)
MILOSEVIC Matthew	SASI (Australia)
NORTH Jade	AIS/Brisbane Strikers (Australia)
PANTELIS Lucas	AIS (Australia)
SRHOJ Wayne	AIS/Brisbane Strikers (Australia)
VAN STRATTAN Jess	Northern Spirit (Australia)

The Itinerary is as follows:

- 14th October Uruguayan U17 National Team (Uruguay)
- 18th October Uruguayan U17 National Team (Uruguay)
- 20th October Nacional (Uruguay)
- 23rd October Universidad Catolica (Chile)
- 26th October Colo Colo (Chile)
- 28th October Universidad de Chile (Chile)
- 1st November Argentine U17 National Team (Argentina)
- 4th November Argentine U17 National Team (Argentina)
- 12th November Match 1 World Youth Cup - Group C Vs Brazil (Christchurch, NZ)

NORTHERN DIVISION

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts	GD
Q.A.S	2	2	0	0	13	2	6	11
Parramatta Power	2	2	0	0	11	0	6	11
A.I.S.	2	2	0	0	9	1	6	8
Wollongong Wolves	2	2	0	0	3	0	6	3
A.C.T.A.S	2	1	1	0	4	8	3	-4
Northern Spirit	1	1	0	0	3	2	3	1
Sydney Olympic	1	1	0	0	1	0	3	1
Sydney United	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	0
Northern Spirit Colts	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	0
N.S.W.I.S.	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Newcastle Breakers	2	0	0	1	0	2	0	-2
Wollongong Colts	1	0	0	1	1	3	0	-2
Newcastle Colts	2	0	0	2	2	5	0	-3
Sydney United Colts	2	0	0	2	3	9	0	-6
Marconi Stallions	1	0	0	1	0	6	0	-6
Marconi Colts	1	0	0	0	0	6	0	-6
Syd Olympic Acad	1	0	0	1	2	8	0	-6

ROUND 2 RESULTS

Parramatta Power 5	A.C.T.A.S	0
Gatt 35, 59		
Thompson 50		
Elrich 83, 86		
N'castle Breakers 0	Wollongong Wolves	1
Q.A.S. 5	Sydney United Colts	0
Cawley 27		
Miner 33		
McKain 39		
Bonato 74		
McKay 88		
A.I.S. 6	Marconi Stallion Colts	0
Gulesserian 18		
Kennedy 39		
Vasilevski 43		
Cvetanoski 65		
Brodie 84		
Last 86		
Sydney United 0	North. Spirit Colts 0	
Newcastle Breakers Clts 2	Northern Spirit 3	
Tomich 86, 89	Monie 47, Kane 63	

Ryan Griffiths 85

N.S.W.I.S. v Sydney Olympic Postponed
Wollongong Wolves Colts v Marconi Stallions Postponed

Bye - Sydney Academy

ROUND 3

Friday 15 October, 1999

A.C.T.A.S. v Q.A.S. - Bruce Stadium 5PM

Saturday 16 October, 1999

Northern Spirit Colts v N'castle Breakers Colts - Christie Park 1PM

Northern Spirit v Newcastle Breakers - Christie Park 3PM

Sydney United Colts v P'atta Power - Sydney United Centre 4PM

Wollongong Wolves v N.S.W.I.S. - Brandon Park 4PM

A.I.S. v Sydney United - AIS Soccer Field 7PM

Sunday 17 October, 1999

Sydney Olympic Academy v Wollongong Wolves Colts -

Wentworth Park 3.30PM

Marconi Stallions v Marconi Stallions Colts - Marconi Stadium

7.15PM

Sydney Olympic Bye

REFEREES

Greg Blake's assesses Australia's refereeing fraternity

This is a story the refereeing fraternity prefers wasn't written. If a match day referee isn't noticed, the likelihood is that he did a good job. Thus, presumably, anything which publicly draws attention to the men (formerly) in black and the job that they do, is unlikely to be welcomed.

Especially when criticism from within the industry is rarely hung out for public consumption.

"The current standard is appalling," was one quote by a long time NSL boss.

"It has dropped considerably in the past ten years and there seems to be decided lack of experience.

"The younger referees have no idea of how to establish a rapport with the players."

These quotes cannot be attributed to the source. Players and coaches cannot make what many of them perceive to be valid appraisals of NSL officials for fear of being hauled over the coals by the league.

The ominous 'please explain' letter and the possibility of subsequent tribunal hearings and hefty fines preclude the game's insiders from airing their opinions.

"It's a disgrace that they (the referees) cannot be held accountable," said another coach who has felt the wrath of the league on more than one occasion.

"If a player has a bad game he can be held out to dry in public and if the media believes a coach is not performing he will soon know about it.

"Officials should be open to the same scrutiny."

That is not an opinion held by all NSL coaches, however, with at least one super successful coach of the past five seasons saying he understood the premise behind keeping criticism 'in house'.

"I guess it's a hard enough job as it is and officials are part of the game," he said.

"Sure, some have bad games but at the end of the day we need to encourage people to do the job and you can't do that by slugging them.

"And in the end I've certainly had no trouble in resolving problems with officials through the right channels."

The right channel, singular, is National Directory of Referees, former whistle-man, Gary Power.

"Head of a department of one," he laughs.

Power does a lot of that. He probably needs to as the weekly go-to man when on field controversies involve his officiating panel - and most incidents invariably do.

Most coaches tend towards isolated issues pertaining to their own team, but the general opinion appears to be that the current NSL panel boasts a significant number of excellent referees, but that league-wide consistency was the main bone of contention.

"As far as I'm concerned there are different interpretations depending on where we're playing and who is in charge," was one complaint.

"And I cannot tell my players how to approach the game if the bloody rules change every week."

Power is defensive but concedes as

THE HANGING JUDGES THE REFS WHO SEE RED					
The top five refs and their red card stats over the past three seasons					
1996-97		1997-98		1998-99	
REFEREE	REDS	REFEREE	REDS	REFEREE	REDS
S. Micallef	10	E. Lennie	8	M. Shield	10
E. Lennie	6	C. Diomos	8	S. Micallef	9
C. Diomos	6	S. Micallef	7	B. Hugo	9
G. Connolly	6	M. Shield	7	E. Lennie	5
M. Breeze	5	M. Breeze	5	M. Breeze	5



much, and it appears a solution is imminent.

"Look, it's an easy allegation to make that referees are inconsistent," Power explains.

"But the reality is that you can't ask Gary Power to referee like Greg Blake.

"There will always be inconsistencies between how different people referee but we are trying to get them together."

By as early as this coming weekend Power will have his own video editing suite and thus the ability to communicate in graphic pictures what is required by NSL officials on a fortnightly basis.

"No coach in the NSL has the problems that the refs have," says Power.

"You try and conduct training session with referees who are based from Perth to Brisbane.

"With the video facility available it will mean I can show every referee at every training venue 'here's what I want in every NSL and youth league game played.

"They can watch and see what they got right and what they got wrong."

Power also concedes that refining consistency in NSL officiating standards is considerably more difficult to achieve in Australia thanks to the game's eclectic cultural mix.

Players, coaches and referees draw on their own varying footballing backgrounds to define the way they see the game as it should be played.

The interpretations and expectations amongst the different coaches are often quite obvious, but Power insists that recent studies on Dutch football provide adequate proof that our NSL referees are well in the game.

The Dutch FA sanctioned study showed that the country's top whistle-men average somewhere between 22 and 25 mistakes per game.

Power says, in comparison, our local inspectors have found that NSL referees average around seven per game.

"Referees are people too, but we're not doing too badly," he said.

Factually, in 1998/99, for the third consecutive season, send-offs were up again.

The previous season's total of 57 card was passed by round 24 and 65 players had been pinged by the end of the regular season, or around one player dismissed per three games played.

That, at least in part, can be explained away by far stricter FIFA guidelines set down for the 1998 World Cup Finals, particularly in regards to tackling from behind.

Curiously though, in one of the toughest finals series contested in recent years only one player, Perth's Tony Franken, was red-carded during the series.

The physical contests were enthralling.

Power calls the contrast between FIFA's movement towards a less body contact game and the Australian sports fan's predilection for physical contact the "unresolvable conflict".

Influenced by a constant diet of AFL and NRL, unconvinced Aussies often

a late Marconi winner at the Melbourne Knights when it appeared that Mike Smith had fouled goalkeeper Joe Didulica in the act of scoring.

Dade required a police escort from Knights Stadium and then didn't referee another game for the rest of the season.

"Referees are consistently appointed or can be demoted on their performances," said Power.

"We don't jump up or yell or scream about it, just as you don't see NSL coaches jumping up and yelling about why they've dropped a player.

"We are trying to treat referees like players in that they are judged on their fitness, their attitude and attendance at training and how they perform on the field.

"Referees are no different to players and they will have lapses in form.

"If they have a shocker they'll be dropped but if their performances are good they'll be appointed again.

"If I think a referee is wrong, I'll tell 'em."

Footnote: The graphic above does establish that certain NSL referees do consistently figure prominently in the arbitration of red-card offences!

Simon Micallef, Eddie Lennie and Matthew Breeze have figured in the list of most season send-offs each of the past three NSL campaigns.

In contrast the likes of Gerry Connolly, Brett Hugo, Barry Panella and Jeremy Blaney have made only cameo 'top five' appearances, or not appeared at all.

Are some too quick in going for the red, or are others not quick enough?

Can we draw any conclusions at all from the graphic?

According to National Director of Referees, Gary Power, readers should be left to establish their own conclusions, based on the following possibilities.

Are these potentially damning stats created by:

- referees who are too aggressive;
- referees who are more adept at strictly following FIFA edicts;
- referees who are judged to the best tend to get the harder or tougher games more regularly.

"It's a disgrace that they (the referees) cannot be held accountable," said another coach who has felt the wrath of the league on more than one occasion.

sneer at the world game, but Power says his referees are between a rock and a hard place.

"Unfortunately, our referees don't make the rules and if we want our referees to use independent discretion then that's where the inconsistencies come in," he explained.

"A referee is not able to be an independent arbiter.

"They'll be in trouble for giving out soft reds or soft yellows and the other way around."

Power wouldn't be drawn on individual cases, but it appears Wayne Dade suffered last year because of his interpretations of rulings.

Dade missed appointments for six weeks after Marconi's controversial early season 5-3 come-back win at home to South Melbourne, when two players were sent off and Marconi were allowed a goal after Mike Smith appeared to head the ball out of South goalkeeper Michael Petkovic's hands.

In Dade's first game back he allowed

Spirit to play on Coastal soccer hotbed?

By Aidan Ormond

It was only a matter of time before the biggest club in Sydney, Northern Spirit, investigated the possibility of playing the occasional NSL game in the soccer hotbed of the NSW Central Coast.

What is more interesting however is the level of support and participation soccer enjoys in this scenic part of NSW.

Simply put, it is phenomenal. Local Super League side Central Coast Coasties enjoys the sort of media coverage some of the NSL old guard clubs would love to have.

The Coasties have a deal with the local Channel 9 affiliate NBN 3, which gives them 20 thirty second ads for the upcoming game, plus there is a highlights package shown on Sunday nights, reports on the sports report of their news service, plus a

about. We believe Soccer is the number one sport on the Central Coast, with the level of participation and interest very high.

"This stadium will really put us on the map, it is right in the middle of Gosford, close to the train station and accommodation.

"At the moment SOCOG is talking to us about possibly using the facility as a training ground for the Olympics. The pitch itself will be perfect, with a dead-flat surface ideal for soccer," he said.

Sandell too was, as expected, equally enthusiastic about the project and what it means for local soccer.

"Soccer fans will be very impressed with Grahame Park.

"It has one of the best views and I would expect more games of a local and international level at the ground in the future. There is a two million dollar turf system that makes it a better stadium, I think, than Parramatta



Spirit fans look like they will get a game on the Central Coast. Photo: Joe Palos

strong coverage from the Central Coasts radio and press.

Club President Ray Sandell made the point that Central Coast is the best supported Super League Club.

"We average 1,000, but at times we have played in front of 2-3,000 fans at Plum Park.

"And because of the high usage every year Plum Park is returned to keep it in the best shape possible."

Super League starts on January 7.

Gosford City Mayor Chris Holstein, himself a keen World Game fan, said that he felt that soccer was the Central Coast's number one sport.

"Rugby League is only a small part of what Grahame Park will be all

Stadium."

At the moment Spirit has advanced the possibility of playing on the Central Coast over the new year period, a time when North Sydney's CBD is usually very quiet (last year's figures at this stage bear this out.)

With the new millennium, it is likely to be even quieter.

The Central Coast is a popular holiday destination about 45 minutes drive north of Sydney, the ideal location for a holiday time game or two.

Spirit Chairman Remo Nogarotto said in a press release that: "The club received a lot of support from the area and we struggled to sustain our huge crowds in the Christmas/New Year period when many people are on holidays and the North Sydney CBD is a ghost town.

"With the draw being revamped we now have extra home games so the possibility of playing one or two matches at Grahame Park has again been taken seriously."

Spirit has Central Coast keeper Jess Van Stratten, plus three others from the area in their youth side.

Newcastle Breakers have also expressed strong interest in playing their first game of the millennium together with Central Coast's opening Super League game, as a double header on January 7.



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BREAKERS OFFICIALLY SOLD TO HALL

By Michael Kmet

After twelve months of drawn out negotiations the sale of the Newcastle Breakers Football Club to Central Coast businessman David Hall is finalised.

The sale, believed to be about \$2 million, was completed at the National Australia Bank in Sydney last Wednesday.

The sale will allow the Breakers to pay creditors the \$180,000 owed by the club.

Morris McAlister has taken over the reins as General Manager.

Hall had nothing but praise for the outgoing consortium that achieved so much with what little resources they had and reserved special plaudits for chairman Bill Collins.

Hall said: "Now we're ready to move on to the next phase of building without the pitfalls that many of the other clubs have encountered."

Hall, a former Novacastrian and soccer fan, has big plans for the Breakers and sees the enormous potential in the Hunter area.

He believes that crowds of 12,000-13,000 every week is not out of the question as the Hunter has one of the largest junior bases in Australia.

Add the unserved Northern New South Wales area and the promise is limitless.

Hall confirmed that he would meet with an interstate company this week to try and



New Newcastle owner David Hall. The successful businessman has big plans for Breakers.

sew up a deal with a major sponsor.

He also stated that he would like to play a match at Gosford's Graham Park, possibly when the Breakers have four home matches in a row in January.

However he allegiance and commitment to Newcastle was clearly shown in the statement, "The Breakers are a Newcastle club and will stay that way."

The Breakers are planning to play a game at Central Coast's 20,000 plus all-seater at Grahame Park.

*See story left.

Solomon Islanders aiming for Olympic glory

By Aidan Ormond

For the past week, the Solomon Islands Olympic squad has been in residence at the NSW Federation's facility just outside Blacktown in Sydney's west.

While here the squad of 21 players, and four officials, has played against the youth teams of some of Sydney's NSL sides (Spirit and Marconi to name two) in preparation for December's Olympic qualifiers.

They are up against New Zealand, Tonga and Samoa in Auckland starting December 11.

The Solomons are able to fund such a trip with the help of the FIFA grant to developing nations, which is mainly spent on trips like this one.

William Lai is the General Secretary of the Solomon Islands Football Federation, and he feels such a trip is the only way that the Solomon Islands can keep improving and producing players such as Bartram Suri, a member of the Kingz' NSL squad.

"The facilities are great and the weather is okay. We are happy to be here and believe this will help us."

Interestingly, the recent Solomon Islands representative in the World Club

Championships qualifiers (Malaita Eagles) won a regional tournament back in 1997, thus qualifying for the prestigious tournament, even though Malaita is not part of the main organised league in the Solomons.

There is no national league as such, the most organised island for competition is Honiara, the capital of Solomon Islands, where teams play each other in a tournament style.

Furthermore, Malaita were ten minutes from beating the now current Oceania champions South Melbourne.

It is considered too difficult for the various islands to get together and play in a national league.

"Actually we would like to import some of our players to your national league. With good coaching definitely we can have players that would be good enough to play NSL.

"We need a technical influence to help us, having said that our players are very skilful," said Lai.

The Solomon Islands are located in Melanesia, a geographic and cultural designation for about 1,000 islands that extend from New Guinea to Fiji. The islands stretch for 1,200 mi/1,900 km northeast of Australia

MILLENNIUM MOVERS AND SHAKERS

With the new millennium almost upon us, Inside Soccer's Aidan Ormond thought it would be interesting if he looked at the Australian soccer identities who could be leading the way in the new century. Of course the players will be the main focus, but coaches, administrators even media are considered.

PLAYERS

MARK BYRNES:

Cement as he is known has all the qualities for a top class international defender. He is strong as an ox, skilful, good attitude and is a leader on the park. Is about to lead the Joeys in the World Cup for U/17s in New Zealand. Was picked in this year's Young Socceroo squad as a fringe player. Has been picked up by Parramatta Power from the NSWIS. Given his potential market value, this could be a very wise investment.

MILE STERJOVSKI:

At 20 he is an outside chance to make the Olyroos for Sydney 2000. Whatever happens he should be overseas in the next 12 to 24 months (he is managed by IMG's Bernie Mandic). Although he has only scored one goal in the first two rounds (from a penalty) he is good enough to hit 20 for the season. This first decade of the new millennium will see him at his peak.

SIMON COLOSIMO:

The well-publicised injury as a result of a clash with Manchester United's Andy Cole in the tour match in July has put his overseas dreams on hold. Word has it Bayern Munich wanted to sign him. As a defender he is very solid, but allied with that is an enormous attacking option. Has scored some wonderful goals. All-round there are few better defenders. It's hopeful he will be back in the Carlton line-up before the end of the season. This year played as a Young Socceroo, Olyroo and Socceroo.

WAYNE SRHOJ

His performances last year with Brisbane Strikers were outstanding. He is an AIS student and currently a Joey.

KASEY WEHRMAN

Another Queenslander destined for overseas stardom. National coach Frank Farina knows all about the exciting attacking midfielder and, if he keeps fit, could be a part of both our Sydney 2000 and World Cup 2002 campaigns. Under club coach Bernd Stange he will receive the best teaching possible on a day-to-day

basis. Is currently injured (tendon).

BRETT EMERTON

The Olyroo captain did not have the best season last year, but looks like he is back to something resembling it this year. Another AIS graduate he, like the other mainstay Olyroos should be a part of the next World Cup campaign, and an overseas career surely looms large. Wants to play for Man Utd. Well, who doesn't Brett!

JACOB BURNS

Has been outstanding this year at his new club Parramatta Power. His improvement in the last 12-24 months has been amazing. Could be overseas after Sydney 2000.

SCOTT MCDONALD:

At 16 was playing NSL at Gippsland Falcons. Was schooled at one of the best academies in Australia, the VIS. Head coach Ernie Merrick rates him highly. A nuggety striker with a good eye for goal. Currently a Joey.

PAUL HENDERSON:

The story of last season in the NSL. Came from nowhere to claim a regular first team keeper's spot at Spirit and did not let coach Arnold down. A bonus was his congenial disposition, which the fans loved. Is good enough to play overseas but making it as the Socceroo number one, given the likes of Bosnich, Kalac and Schwarzer, will be hard in the first decade. Perhaps a Socceroo in his thirties?

IVAN ERGIC

The former AIS student has been wowing the knowledgeable Perth Glory coaching staff. His performances pre-season and his goal against Marconi on the weekend shows his signing is an astute one.

JOANNE PETERS:

Was one of the Matildas who has shown enough to suggest a long career in the national team. At 20 the next ten years should see her cement a place and a possible captaincy.

KELLY GOLEBIOWSKI

At just 17 was in the national team for our disappointing WWC this year. Tenacious and not overawed when playing star sides, she is a player who is totally focussed on her soccer career. Could play till 2020 if she stays fit.

COACHES

ANGE POSTECOGLOU:

At just 33 his best coaching years are ahead of him, yet remarkably he is already one of the most successful NSL coaches. It's inevitable that he will end up in the national coaching ranks. Sadly, he may have to move to Sydney to realise his goals, which is a sad indictment on the Sydney-centric state of affairs with Soccer Australia.

FRANK FARINA:

If it all goes well he could be coaching the national team up to 2006. At 35 he is another that is coming into his best years.

LEE STERREY:

The unassuming Sterrey did a wonderful job last year with limited resources at Newcastle. Still shy of his 40th birthday this quintessential Aussie has the knack of getting his point across. Is well-organised a good motivator and knows how to get the best out of young players. Expect to see him coaching, at least NSL, for the next decade and perhaps further.

ADMIN

REMO NOGAROTTO:

Has shown with Spirit that he has a clear vision for the future. His style is not everybody's cup of tea, and the at times vitriolic political press crucified him over the Liberals' last campaign in NSW, yet as a soccer administrator he knows exactly what he is doing. Would be a great Soccer Australia appointment.

NICK TANA:

Business acumen together with a fierce loyalty to those in the wider community who want to watch soccer unencumbered by racial lines. His success at Glory shows he is right, but like Nogarotto, is not liked by the moribund old guard. If given the chance would move Soccer ahead fast and effectively.

NED COTEN:

Has taken the difficult job of change management at Adelaide Force. Their new CEO has plenty of ideas aimed at reinventing Adelaide soccer now there is only one side representing the city. If soccer can hold on to him he will be a very successful administrator.

JEROME LYFORD:

Carlton's marketing and admin executive has the qualifications and passion for the job. Unfortunately Melbourne is a hard nut to crack but the level of sponsorship at Carlton has risen significantly this year.

ROGER LEFORT:

Perth Glory's General Manager, together with Nick Tana, is one of the main reasons why Glory has been so successful. An administrator who knows how to get things done without putting too many noses out of joint. A charming and polite person who has moulded much of the Glory image.

DAVID HALL:

The new owner of Newcastle Breakers could, in this new millennium, make Newcastle the success it clearly deserves. A successful and wealthy businessman in his own right (he doesn't need Newcastle, but perhaps it needs him?) his plans should really put the club on the map in the Hunter these next ten years or so.

MEDIA: TV

KYLE PATTERSON:

Is one of the best on-air personalities at SBS TV. Is the natural heir to Les Murray in the new millennium. Good knowledge of the game and is able to put the point across. Is considered one of the 'new guard' at the SBS sports team.

PAUL WILLIAMS:

Like Paterson, is likely to take more of a role in the next century. Relaxed in front of camera, he also commentates for both SBS and Channel 7. Another of the SBS 'new guard' who should expand his role in the next decade.

RADIO

RALPH BARBA:

Knows the scene very well and presents a lively and amusing soccer show in Melbourne. Won a Soccer Australia media award this year.

PRINT

PATRICK MANGAN:

The former Age Soccer writer is young enough, and talented enough, to make his mark. Won a Soccer Australia media award this year.

CAMERON ATFIELD:

The Brisbane-based university student shows enough potential to suggest that he will blossom in the new millennium.

BRUCE HOLLOWAY:

Even though he is NZ-based he is worth mentioning given the Kiwi flavour to our NSL. Has won a number of awards in New Zealand and has a wonderful take on events across the Tasman.

BEN CUBBY:

The Sydney-based University student is another with plenty of potential. Should do well.

MATTHEW HALL

Co-wrote the excellent Robbie Slater autobiography 'The Hard Way'. Works in soccer but also writes on a variety of topics, from music to modern culture. Great writer and still young.

SIMUNIC NOT GONE, YET!



Craig Moore ... an Aussie Abroad without a game on the weekend

One of the forgotten Aussies Abroad is Ernie Tapai who is playing for Home United in Singapore. The Singapore Straits Times reports on his, and his club's progress.

SO WHAT if Home United did not dish out a champion's game? A well-taken strike by Australian Ernest Tapai in the 14th minute was enough to get the champagne bottles uncorked, for coach

Robert Alberts to keep his goat-tee and for club chairman Tan Boon Huat to do his famous dance with the Police Dragonettes.

The Protectors of Home United are S-League champions. A 1-0 win over a game Jurong United at Bishan Stadium marked the end of a fairy-tale

year."

But the Bishan brigade is not complaining. Although Home United did enough to secure the three points for the title, sparing itself the agony of having to go to Tanjong Pagar United next week to win it, coach Alberts must surely be a bit concerned with some obvious flaws.

One main reason that the Protectors were able to maintain a 21-game unbeaten run was their solid backline.

But in the game against Jurong, it was horrendous to see such experienced players as R. Sasikumar and S. Subramani making the most elementary of mistakes. Both earned yellow cards for silly offences. Sasikumar was replaced after 45 minutes. Home went on the offensive from the first whistle and it became pretty obvious that much of the play would be dictated by its two foreign signings, Zsolt Bucs and Tapai.

But, after Tapai had scored off a Bucs free-kick - the Protectors surprisingly lost their composure.

The Police Band struck up Waltzing Matilda to celebrate. But on the field, the Home boys were not waltzing after that. They went all out to score the second goal for the all-important psychological buffer.

But, despite the band urging them on with the rousing William Tell Overture, they lost steam.

Bucs was slowly marked out of the game by E. Manimohan while Tapai had a bad cut on the head.

With their midfield engine sputtering, the Protectors

score.

So it was that the Protectors, who regained the offensive in the last few minutes, held on.

When referee N. Santhan, who had a competent game, blew the whistle, the band blasted the one song it had waited all night to play: Congratulations.

One could almost hear Sir Cliff Richard accompanying them. But not Bucs. Stripped to his shorts, he ran up and down, acknowledging the fans, stopping just long enough to talk to Timesport.

"I can tell you now," he said, "I've not slept well the past three days. Yes, I was nervous and anxious.

"This is a new side and for us to win it this year makes me very, very happy."

Added the seasoned veteran, who has played for Hungary at Wembley: "This is the proudest day of my career."

Another Aussie trying to become an Aussie Abroad is the Adelaide Force goalkeeper, Jason Petkovic.

Petkovic, who is on a trial with English Premier League team Southampton, saved a penalty in an impressive performance in a specially-arranged practice match which the Saints won 1-0 against Brighton.

The Croatian-born Australian, who was between the sticks when the Socceroos took on Manchester United in a pre-season friendly, is out of contract with Adelaide City and on a three-week trial at the Dell.

Petkovic said: "It is my ambition to make it in England. The Premier League is one of the best in the world and has really come to prominence.

"If I get the opportunity I would love to sign here. It is a friendly club and city and everyone has made me very welcome. And it would be a chance to get into the Premiership. I felt yesterday's game went OK. The penalty was not the best but I still had to go the right way."

Reserve team coach Dennis Rofe said: "He did OK. He certainly wasn't hopeless and one of those who you say no to instantly.

"He wasn't overworked but did what he had to do - and a penalty save and clean sheet looks good on the CV. Hopefully we will get another look at him and then sit down and have a chat."

Australian born Josip Simunic, chosen for Croatia's Under 21 team that played Yugoslavia is not lost to Australia, just yet.

Simunic was part of the squad for the weekend game but did not take the field.

As Simunic did not step onto the field for the young Croatian team he remains eligible for Australia, if he so chooses.

The Croatian team drew 2-2 with their Yugoslav counterparts and won their group to advance to the next stage of the European Under 21 Championship.

In a recent interview with the Hamburg media, where he is playing for the local team, Simunic has expressed mixed emotions, "I am Australian and Croatian, I have homeland feelings for both countries."

"During the (long-term) rehabilitation (from foot injuries) I had constant contact with (Croatia) national coach Ivor Susak."

The other Aussie, Ante Seric, now playing for Italy's Verona, was in Croatia's starting line up. He was replaced in the 87th minute and earned himself a yellow card early in the game.

The English and Scottish Premier Leagues both had the weekend off due to Scotland participating in the EURO 2000 qualifiers and England playing a friendly against Belgium after completing their EURO 2000 matches.

This gave our most prominent Aussies Abroad, Harry Kewell, Mark Viduka, Craig Moore and Tony Vidmar, a bit of time to recover from niggling injuries.

I'm sure Frank Farina would have preferred to be training these players for a game rather than merely talking to them and checking on their availability for Australia's next games, against Brazil, presuming it does eventuate. If only we had a long term plan!

In the Nationwide League Division One Jason Kearton played a full game for Crewe in its 1-0 home win over Sheffield United for whom Shaun Murphy also played a full game.

Frank Talia, thus far a regular for Swindon Town, started the 1-1 home draw with Stockport on the bench and stayed there for the duration of the game.

The three Aussies playing for Wolverhampton had mixed success in their club's 1-0 home win over Bolton. Kevin Muscat played the full game while Steve Corica was replaced in the 56th minute and the other Steve, goalkeeper Mautone, stayed on the bench for the whole game.

In the Nationwide League Division Two, Tim Cahill is having another successful season for Millwall - he again played the full game and scored in the 72nd minute.

His team-mate, Lucas Neill was not part of Millwall's squad, due to injury, that won 3-1 away to Oxford.

Tynan Scope, Bristol City's reserve goalkeeper remained on the bench in his team's 0-1 away loss to Preston North End.

Andrew Bernal played a full game for Reading in a 1-2 away loss to Stoke City.



Jason Petkovic ... trials at Southampton

season for a club which was once better known for propping up the league.

As one wag among the 3,500 crowd said: "This league trophy will go well with their wooden spoons."

Tan, the Home Affairs Ministry's deputy secretary and the inspiration behind the Protectors' rise, said: "This win was a bit premature. We had set ourselves a top-three placing this

retreated.

Jurong's player-coach V. Sundramoorthy, who had benched himself after failing a fitness test, seized the initiative.

Out came midfielder Thiru Kumaran and in came forward Razali Rashid; then midfielder F. Sugunan came on for defender Shahri Ismail. The most venomous Cobra was Dalis Supait. He ran at the defenders, turned and twisted them but he did not

SWEDEN SAVES ENGLAND WITH 2-0 VICTORY

Sweden finished their splendid EURO 2000 qualifying campaign on a triumphant note with a success in Solna which dashed Poland's dream of booking a ticket to next season's final round in Belgium and the Netherlands.

Kennet Andersson's 64th-minute strike and a last-minute clincher from Henrik Larsson sealed the match - and left England celebrating a last-gasp passage into the qualifying competition play-offs by virtue of their win and draw against Poland in the direct qualifying encounters.

It took some time for both sides to settle down, with Poland knowing that they would be in the final round if they could avoid defeat. The visitors gave away a host of free-kicks in the opening stages, and Sweden failed to seriously threaten the Polish rear-guard in a tense and tight opening phase. At the other end, Sweden's goalkeeper Magnus Hedman almost made a mess of the first corner of the game after 12 minutes when Poland finally threatened.

Poland continued to look the more confident of the two teams, and they twice went close just after the 20-minute mark. Andrzej Juskowiak was the danger man on both occasions, firstly hooking in a shot from a narrow angle which flew wide, and then flicking Tomasz Hajto's dangerous centre just past the upright. Meanwhile, Sweden were getting absolutely no change from an uncompromising Polish defence, although Henrik Larsson saw an agile header held by visiting 'keeper Adam Matysek.

It must have been a frustrating first half-hour for England and their followers, who were praying for a Swedish victory. The Swedes seemed unable to switch out of low gear, and Poland were coping ably with anything which came into their penalty area. Andersson set up Larsson for a shot on the edge of the box, but the home striker pulled his effort well wide. Otherwise, the visitors were never in any real danger as the first half drew to a close.

Gary Sundgren came on to replace the injured Roland Nilsson for the second half, but the Poles continued to seem the more likely to snatch the lead, and they came desperately close immediately after the break. Hajto was left unmarked in the penalty area, but put his header over the top when it seemed easier to score. The hour mark arrived with Sweden looking thoroughly unimpressive and sluggish, and the Poles still creating the greater moments of danger. Piotr Swierczewski poked an effort just wide from Hajto's low centre with the minutes ticking away.

Suddenly, just when it seemed that Poland must hang on for a share of the spoils which would have sent them to EURO 2000, the Swedes shook themselves out of their lethargy to grab the lead with 26 minutes left. Fredrik Ljungberg slotted a neat pass through to Andersson, and the striker made no mistake, hammering the ball past Matysek. The goal must have been greeted rapturously in England - but the Poles could have scored an oh-so-vital equaliser a minute later. Sweden failed to clear in a goalmouth

scramble, and Radoslaw Michalski's goalbound effort was deflected wide.

A nail-biting finish looked on the cards, and Poland began throwing caution to the wind in a desperate effort to score. Andrzej Juskowiak headed narrowly wide, and Rafal Siadaczka hammered a free-kick inches over the crossbar. The Poles' desperation left plenty of room for Sweden to hit hard on the counter, and Andersson contrived to miss an easy chance with the goal gaping. But the Swedes eventually finished the stronger of the two teams, and they added a second goal which shattered Poland's hopes in the 90th minute.

Larsson made himself the toast of all England when he prodded home from close range - leaving Englishmen everywhere grateful to the Swedes for throwing Kevin Keegan's side a EURO 2000 lifeline.

Scotland - already safely through to the EURO 2000 qualifying play-offs, gave their confidence another boost with a no-nonsense success over Lithuania in their first match at Glasgow's Hampden Park Stadium for three years.

Goals from Don Hutchison, Gary McSwegan and Colin Cameron helped the Scots to victory in a match which they dominated throughout.

Coach Craig Brown sent out an experimental Scottish team for this final EURO 2000 Qualification Group Nine clash, knowing that a play-off slot was already in the bag after the 1-0 midweek success over Bosnia and Herzegovina, with goalkeeper Jonathan Gould among those being handed a first Scottish cap. Meanwhile, Robertas Tautkas was also making his debut as Lithuania's coach.

Scotland played some fine football in the first half, with the new-look strike duo of Gary McSwegan and Mark Burchill causing the Lithuanian defence plenty of problems, and McSwegan might have given the home side the lead early on, blasting well over from an ideal far-post position. Visiting goalkeeper Pavel Leus made a fine save to deny Burchill, who also saw an effort blocked on the line.

The livewire Burchill also had a goal disallowed for an infringement, but the Lithuanians finally broke out of deep defence around the half-hour mark, Saulius Mikalajunas firing wide, and Gould coming into serious action for the first time to tip a speculative long-range effort by Tomas Zvirgzdauskas over the top. This was only a brief respite as the Scots came pouring forward again, and Leus made a magnificent reflex stop from a fierce Don Hutchison volley, before Craig Burley sent another effort screaming inches wide.

Scotland opened the second half on fire, and they put themselves in the driving seat with two goals in two minutes. Burchill raced onto Hutchison's pass after 48 minutes, only to be brought down in the area by Andrejus Tereskinas. Burchill got up to take the penalty, only to hit the post, but Hutchison was on the spot to pounce on the rebound and fire

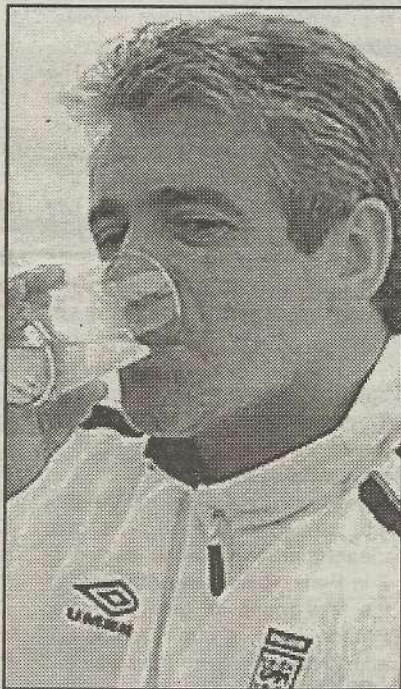
home. It was two almost immediately. Burchill and McSwegan combined, with McSwegan marking his arrival on the international scene by slotting the ball past Leus.

The game drew to a close with Scotland in total command, and they increased their victory margin a minute from time. Substitutes Cameron and Kevin Gallacher opened up Lithuania's defence again, Gallacher crossing for Cameron to find the target with a crisp volley - sending Brown's men off to the play-off in triumphant mood.

Switzerland punished Wales' defensive weaknesses without mercy to end their EURO 2000 qualifying campaign on a winning note at Wrexham.

The Swiss finished level with Denmark in the Group One table, but miss out on next year's final round by virtue of their record against Denmark in the direct encounters between the two teams.

Welsh caretaker-manager Mark Hughes hoped to win the three points to boost his claims for



the coach's job on a full-time basis, but his team let him down, allowing Switzerland to coast to a comfortable success.

The Swiss looked the better and more cohesive team throughout, and it was no surprise when they went ahead after 16 minutes. Bernt Haas headed a corner back across the area, and Alexandre Rey made no mistake with a firm close-range header.

The first half ended with Wales still looking to produce anything in the way of flowing football, but the home side came out with more purpose for the second half, and Dean Saunders completely missed a fine John Oster cross when it looked easier to score.

The home side were punished when Switzerland broke out to seal the points on the hour. Patrick Buhlmann raced clear with the Welsh defence caught upfield. He forced the ball past Jones, and followed up to score with a neat back-heel.

Northern Ireland ended a poor EURO 2000 qualifying campaign in disappointing fashion,



Kennet Andersson celebrates one of the goals that saved England and manager Kevin Keegan (below left)

Finland exposing all of their old weaknesses to romp to a convincing success in Helsinki.

The only consolation for Northern Ireland was that they scored their first competitive goal in some 450 minutes of action.

Although Northern Ireland made a bright start, they were soon rocked back on their heels by a slapdash goal after only nine minutes. Finnish keeper Jani Viander hoisted a long clearance downfield, and striker Jonatan Johansson had far too much pace for the visitors' defence, racing on to score easily.

It was almost two before the break, but Mika Matti Paatelainen sent a header flashing only inches wide as Northern Ireland struggled to cope with the Finns' threat in the air. The Irish did manage to rally towards the interval, but a header wide from James Quinn was their only real moment of menace.

Finland kept up the pressure on the restart, with visiting goalkeeper Mark Taylor grateful to cling onto a fierce Johansson cross-shot. Yet it was Northern Ireland who dragged themselves level against the run of play after 59 minutes. Peter Kennedy swung over a free kick, and Jeff Whitley headed through for his first international goal.

This rare goal from Northern Ireland, however, seemed to galvanise the Finns, and they came back with a vengeance to run riot in the final half-hour. Four minutes after the visiting leveller, Sami Hyypia headed home Jarkko Juhani Wiss's corner to put Finland back in front, and Joonas Kolkka punished some ponderous defending to make it 3-1 after 73 minutes. The inevitable fourth arrived seven minutes from the end, Kolkka taking full advantage of another mix-up to cheer the sparse crowd by adding his second of the night.

Romania secured their place in next year's European Championship final round with a 3-0 victory over minnows Liechtenstein in their Group Seven qualifying match at the Rheinpark stadium.

The victory gave them 24 points and first place in the group, a point clear of Portugal who defeated Hungary 3-0 to also clinch an automatic place in the finals as the runner-up with the best record.

Substitute striker Ionel Ganea of German side VfB Stuttgart scored twice in eight min-

utes of the second half to make sure of the Romanians' victory. It was his sixth goal in nine internationals.

Midfielder Laurentiu Rosu opened the scoring after 26 minutes of a first half Romania totally dominated.

Russian referee Abdeir Butenko sent-off Liechtenstein's Thomas Beck for a crude tackle from behind after 59 minutes.

Norway, already assured of first place in European Championship Group Two, confirmed their superiority in the group with a 2-1 win away against Latvia at Riga's Daugava stadium.

Constant rain made conditions difficult in Riga and it was obvious that both teams had nothing left to play for, as very few chances were created in a lacklustre first half. Thanks to a strong physical performance in midfield, the visitors dominated initial proceedings and were nearly rewarded when Andre Bergdølmo delivered a superb corner for Steffen Iversen in the 14th minute, but the Tottenham Hotspur striker squandered the excellent opportunity.

Latvia were only occasionally able to relieve themselves from the Norwegian pressure, but against the run of play, the hosts could have taken the lead when Marian Pahars found himself in acres of space on the edge of the penalty area, but his weak finish proved no problem for keeper Frode Olsen.

Norwegian coach Nils Johan Semb decided to substitute Steffen Iversen with Andreas Lund during the break and the change had the desired effect, as Lund rose to steer a cross in the direction of Ole Gunnar Solskjær seven minutes after the restart, and the Manchester United striker fired home from close range.

However, the hosts were back on terms within a minute as Marian Pahars hustled past Vegard Heggem to restore parity with an thunderous shot off the crossbar. The equaliser took the sting out of the match as both teams seemed content with the draw. Norway, though, still managed to capitalise on their territorial dominance as Chelsea's Tore Andre Flo provided the visitors with all three points four minutes before time when he was left with an easy task of shooting into an empty net after Henning Berg and Solskjær had confused the entire Latvian defence.

WORLD CHAMPIONS SQUEEZE INTO EURO 2000



Substitute David Trezeguet celebrates the third and winning goal

World champions France, under pressure throughout the entire campaign, squeezed into Euro 2000 after beating Iceland 3-2 in Paris on the last day of qualifying.

But the French had to rely on a dramatic late equaliser by the Ukraine in Moscow that earned them a 1-1 draw and a play-off berth and eliminated Russia in the process.

A topsy-turvy group was settled in thrilling style after simultaneous kick-offs in Paris and Moscow. With 20 minutes to go, France, sensationally, were out of contention after squandering a two-goal lead, invoking memories of their last-minute elimination for the 1994 World Cup.

Substitute David Trezeguet then made it 3-2, putting France into the play-off position as Russia took a 72nd minute lead in Moscow and looked like they would win the group.

Dramatically, Russia's own hopes were dashed when they gifted their arch-rivals an equaliser with just two minutes remaining, sending the 80,000 crowd into stunned disbelief.

Russian keeper Alexandre Filimonov fumbled a simple cross from Andrei Shevchenko that offered no apparent danger but ended up in the net to give Ukraine, group leaders at the start of play but themselves at one point eliminated, an historic play-off berth.

At the state-of-the-art Stade de France where they won the World Cup so impressively last year, France had most of the early possession against Iceland but were gifted the opening goal when Rikhardur Dadason headed Djorkaeff's freekick into his own net after 17 minutes.

Iceland, who had to win to stand any chance of keeping alive their slender hopes, rallied briefly but went two goals down six minutes before half-time after a superb move that ended with Djorkaeff beating two defenders and crashing a shot into the net.

Three minutes after the break, Iceland pulled a goal back with a spectacular 30-yard freekick from Eyjoflur Sverrisson and levelled after 56 minutes after scything through the home defence.

In a two-against-two move, Brynar Gunnarsson steered the ball home after Didier Deschamps failed with a last-ditch tackle. Thirty

seconds earlier, Djorkaeff had the ball into the net for France but was ruled offside.

It was now déjà vu for France, who were facing a repeat of their infamous failure to beat Bulgaria at home in their final home qualifier for the 1994 World Cup.

They tore into the Icelandic defence, with reigning world player of the year Zinedine Zidane doing his best to conjure up a winner that would save France's blushes.

Trezeguet came on for Laslandes in a last-ditch move by coach Roger Lemerre. It proved an inspired substitution. With 19 minutes left, Trezeguet restored France's lead, following up to score after Marcel Desailly's header from Zidane's cross was only parried by the Iceland keeper.

Russian goalkeeper Alexandre Filimonov made a dramatic last-gasp mistake that will haunt him for the rest of his life. Two minutes from time, with his team a goal up, and apparently heading towards EURO 2000, Filimonov fumbled a cross from Andrei Shevchenko and watched in horror as the ball crossed the line.

This awful "clanger", coupled with France's narrow win over Iceland in Paris, left a desperately tight group completely overturned. France went through as group winners - the Ukrainians face the qualifying play-offs as group runners-up - and Russia somehow find themselves out in the cold.

In Moscow, as the most competitive group in the qualifying campaign came down to a nail-biting climax, Russia had double the possession and twice the chances against Ukraine but missed them all until Karpin appeared to have bagged a place in next year's finals.

Then came Filimonov's embarrassing last-gasp blunder that gave his country's most hated opponents their moment of glory and kept Russia, who failed to qualify for France 98, on the sidelines for yet another major competition.

Ukraine - group leaders before the kick-off - made the brighter start, with the livewire Shevchenko and Serhii Skachenko both testing Filimonov. Russia needed to score and stay ahead to keep their qualification hopes intact, but despite gradually taking the lion's share of possession, they

were being kept busy by some enterprising Ukrainian counter-attacks.

The news from Paris that France were 2-0 up against Iceland leant even more urgency to Russia's efforts, and Dmitri Khokhlov was foiled by a smart save from Shovkovskiy soon after the half-hour. With five minutes left before the interval, Russia missed a gilt-edged chance. Alexandre Panov was left unmarked in front of goal from Andrei Tikhonov's header, but he somehow contrived to blast the ball over the bar from the best opportunity of the match so far. Egor Titov then sent a header flying wide as Russia ended the half battering the Ukrainian goal.

The half-time results from Paris and Moscow meant that France would be group-winners if the scorelines remained the same, with Ukraine finishing as group runners-up and the Russians eliminated along with Iceland - who themselves could even qualify if they were to beat France, and other results were to go in their favour. As in the first half, it was Ukraine who made the early running, Serhii Rebrov blasting a free kick narrowly wide.

In Paris, France had been pegged back to 2-2 by Iceland. If the scorelines did not evolve, Ukraine would advance as group winners, with Russia second. The news obviously boosted the visitors, and Rebrov saw another effort blocked as the rain poured down. With France taking the lead again, Russia had to step up a gear. They needed a goal, and again launched a spell of ceaseless pressure, without managing to break down the determined Ukraine wall in front of them.

The goal all of Russia had been waiting for finally arrived with 17 minutes remaining. Panov was fouled 20 metres out in front of goal. Valeri Karpin stepped up, and drove his free kick through the wall and past Shovkovskiy. The goal meant that, with France leading 3-2 in Paris, Russia were through to the final round as group winners, France were group runners-up, and Ukraine were on their way out of the competition.

Russia, urged on by the huge crowd, tried to slow the game down, confining play to the centre circle. They might even have snatched a second, only for Vladimir Bestchastnykh's drive to hit a visiting defender. Then, with time apparently running out on the Ukraine's EURO 2000 dream, the unthinkable happened. Shevchenko swung over what appeared to be a harmless cross from the right. It looked easy for Filimonov. Somehow he fell backwards, letting the ball slip. Suddenly, the ball was in the net, with the Ukrainians going crazy, and the Russian players holding their heads in disbelief. There was no way back from that error. The Russians - from being on a plane to EURO 2000 - saw their hopes lying in tatters. The Ukrainians had rescued what seemed to be a lost cause - and, thousands of miles away in Paris, the French celebrated group victory after a roller-coaster qualifying competition which literally went to the last gasp.

Portugal produced a performance to order to qualify directly for the European

Championship final round, with their three-goal winning margin sufficient for them to clinch a place in the finals round as the runners-up with the best record against the top teams in their respective group.

Despite being reduced to only ten men before half-time, the stylish Portuguese easily dominated the lacklustre Hungarians and were unlucky not to score more.

They finished behind Romania, 3-0 winners over Liechtenstein, in Group Seven, but with 23 points and the best record of any of the second-placed teams in the nine groups.

Florentina midfielder Rui Costa put the Portuguese into the lead with a 15th-minute penalty after striker Joao Pinto was brought down in the box. With the roars of a 65,000 strong crowd in Sport Lisboa e Benfica Stadium to drive them on, Portugal added a second through Vieira Pinto just one minute later when the Benfica captain rose to head home from a Luis Figo corner.

The vital third goal came in the 58th minute when Barcelona winger Luis Figo found Abel Xavier unmarked in the box and the Everton player made no mistake with his header from close range.

"We showed that we are a great team and we are going to get stronger," a beaming Humberto Coelho, the team's coach, said after the match.

"The atmosphere was extraordinary and the crowd was really fantastic," he said.

However, Portugal had looked for a moment that they could be in trouble after striker Pedro Pauleta was sent off in the 41st minute for a second yellow card.

The striker handled the ball in the area as he made a desperate lunge to reach a teasing cross from Figo that floated over the head of Hungary's giant goalkeeper Gabor Kiraly. Pauleta had received his first caution for lobbing the ball into the net after being adjudged offside.

Vieira Pinto, who tormented the Hungarian defence all night, might have been awarded another penalty when he appeared to be brought down after 56 minutes, but Danish referee Kim Milton Nielsen waved play on. The striker then rattled the cross-bar with a fierce drive in injury time.

The country's delight in qualifying for the European Championships for only the third time could be heightened, and Hungary's disappointment at their failure deepened, if UEFA decides on Tuesday to stage Euro 2004 in Portugal.

Portugal is one of three candidates to host the championships. Spain and Austria and Hungary, who are making a joint bid, are the others.

Italy clinched a place in next summer's EURO 2000 final round in Belgium and the Netherlands with a disappointing goalless draw against Belarus in the pouring rain in Minsk.

Stunned by their recent home setback against Denmark, Italy were by far the better side throughout, and created a number of chances, only to be thwarted by a packed Belarus defence which

made life difficult for Dino Zoff's team throughout the game.

The closest Italy came to a goal was near the half-hour, when Inter Milan striker Christian Vieri created space in the box, only to see his fierce 18-yard drive hit the woodwork and rebound to safety. Otherwise, the Italians huffed and puffed, but were unable to unlock an uncompromising home rear-guard.

Heavy rain throughout the match also made it difficult for both sides to keep their feet. The victory gave Italy group success over second-placed Denmark by one point. The Danes now face a qualifying play-off as they endeavour to reach the final round.

Germany rode their luck, keeping a clean sheet and earning the point they needed to qualify for next year's EURO 2000 final round in Belgium and the Netherlands.

The reigning European champions held off a strong challenge from Turkey, for whom the draw means a place in the qualifying play-offs.

Contrary to expectations, it was Turkey who looked the livelier team before the break. They kept the Germans on their toes in defence with some neat combination play. After Oliver Bierhoff had nodded Mehmet Scholl's free kick over the bar in an initial German threat, the Turks took over. Tayfun Korkut found himself with just home keeper Oliver Kahn to beat, only to fire his effort wide, and Ali Riza Seren Yalcin hammered a fierce drive inches over the bar.

In a desperately disappointing first-half display, Germany hardly put together a worthwhile attack. Their midfield was out-fought by a Turkish team which was quicker into the tackle, and the home defence had its hands full trying to contain Turkey's more dangerous probing runs from deep.

German coach Erich Ribbeck brought on Christian Nerlinger to replace Dietmar Hamman in midfield for the second half, and the change had the desired effect, as Germany gradually wrested control. Veteran Lothar Matthaus came forward from his libero position to shoot narrowly past the post, and Turkish keeper Rustu Recber was brought into action to make a smart save from Bierhoff. Turkey continued to threaten on the break, but they were now more preoccupied with keeping the much-improved Germans at bay.

Turkey did not manage a shot on Germany's goal for 40 minutes of the second half, but they suddenly created a moment of danger which could have put the Germans' EURO 2000 hopes in peril. Four minutes were left when substitute Arif Erdem was given too much space, only to fire his shot into the side-netting.

At the other end, Oliver Neuville had a late chance to clinch the match for the Germans, but his close-range drive was held by Recber. The Turks tried to launch a grandstand finish, but the massed German rearguard stood firm, and it was Ribbeck's men who were raising their arms to the sky at the final whistle, knowing that their chances of defending the title they won in England in 1996 remained intact.

ARCH ENEMY DENIES CROATIA PLACE IN FINALS

Ten-man Yugoslavia came back from conceding an early goal to draw 2-2 with Croatia in their European Championship Group Eight clash in Zagreb.

Yugoslavia, who had defender Zoran Mirkovic sent off after 37 minutes, qualify for next summer's final round in Belgium and the Netherlands, while Croatia, third in last summer's FIFA World Cup, miss out even on the play-offs, finishing two points behind the Yugoslavs and one behind the second-placed Republic of Ireland.

Croatia went ahead in the 20th minute when Arsenal striker Davor Suker set up Lazio's Alen Boksic with a perfect defence-splitting pass, and Boksic clipped the ball over the leg of falling Yugoslavia goalkeeper Ivica Kralj. Minutes earlier Croatia had an apparently good goal disallowed, when Suker headed in from close range and Kralj seemed to have parried the effort after the ball had crossed the goal-line but the referee waved play on.

However, the hosts were unable to hold on to their lead as holes in their defence started to show. And, in the 26th minute, Sinisa Mihajlovic sent across a trademark curling free kick from the right, and Predrag Mijatovic flicked the ball past goalkeeper Drazen Ladic to make it 1-1. Mijatovic was credited with the strike, but the final touch seemed to have come off a Croat defender.

Five minutes later Mihajlovic again turned provider, as a carbon-copy cross set up his Lazio teammate Dejan Stankovic, who headed in. Goalkeeper Drazen Ladic got his hands on the ball but did not hold it and allowed it to roll under his body to put Yugoslavia 2-1 up.

Croatia's chances were boosted eight minutes from the end of the first half, when Yugoslav right-back Zoran Mirkovic of Juventus was shown the red card for grabbing Robert Jarni below the belt. They made the most of their numerical advantage after the restart when Parma's Mario Stanic headed home from close range after a perfect cross from Boksic, Croatia's player of the night. But instead of pressing on for the winner, which the capacity 38,000 crowd expected, Croatia's game fell apart, especially in midfield where they sorely missed playmaker Boban.

"We had bad luck with the players. Zvonimir Boban of course, Igor Stimac who means a lot of us..." said Croatia coach Miroslav Blazevic after the dramatic game - the first the two countries played against each other in Croatia. Croatia were without injured captain Boban and three key defenders -- Slaven Bilic, Stimac and Dario Simic. "We still had quite a few chances but it wasn't our day," Miroslav Blazevic said. "But life goes on, what's there is there. We can't kill ourselves," he said after the game that he personally dubbed "the match of the century" and of his career.

ry" and of his career.

The Republic of Ireland surrendered first place in European Championship Qualification Group Eight three minutes into injury time, and will now have to win a two-legged play-off to reach next summer's final round.

The Irish team seemed well on course for the automatic qualification spot reserved for the group winners thanks to Niall Quinn's 19th-minute opener, only for FYR Macedonia's Goran Stavreski to score three minutes into injury time. That score ensured that Yugoslavia would take first place in the group, with Ireland in second.

The Irish will be hoping that they can improve on their only previous play-off experience, as they missed out on qualifying for the last European Championship final round and the 1998 World Cup finals after losing play-offs to the Netherlands and Belgium respectively.

Now, they will face one of Denmark, Slovenia, Turkey, Ukraine, England, Israel or Cyprus, or Scotland in the play-offs. The draw takes place in Aachen, Germany tomorrow.

To compound matters for Ireland, influential midfielder Mark Kinsella will miss the first-leg of the play-off after picking up his second yellow card of the competition.

Ireland started well with Mark Kennedy causing the weakened Macedonian defence problems with his runs down the left. He was fouled after nine minutes, and Gary Kelly just failed to get to Steve Staunton's free-kick. However, nine minutes later, Kelly's corner was headed back across goal by Kenny Cunningham, and Quinn forced the ball past Antonio Filevski and into the net.

Ireland were out to avenge their 1997 defeat in Skopje, but they were unable to build on the breakthrough. Indeed, the score remained constant while the goals were going in Zagreb, though Ireland's qualification for the play-offs, at least, was not threatened.

Ultimately, they paid the price for failing to kill off the game, and with their front-line strikers, Quinn and Robbie Keane, withdrawn in the second half, they elected to sit back and defend.

Apart from Quinn's strike, chances were few and far between in the opening half, with Dzevdet Sainovski and Steve Staunton coming closest for both sides with well-struck free-kicks that were well-saved.

Macedonia, playing for nothing more than pride, showed their intent 13 minutes into the

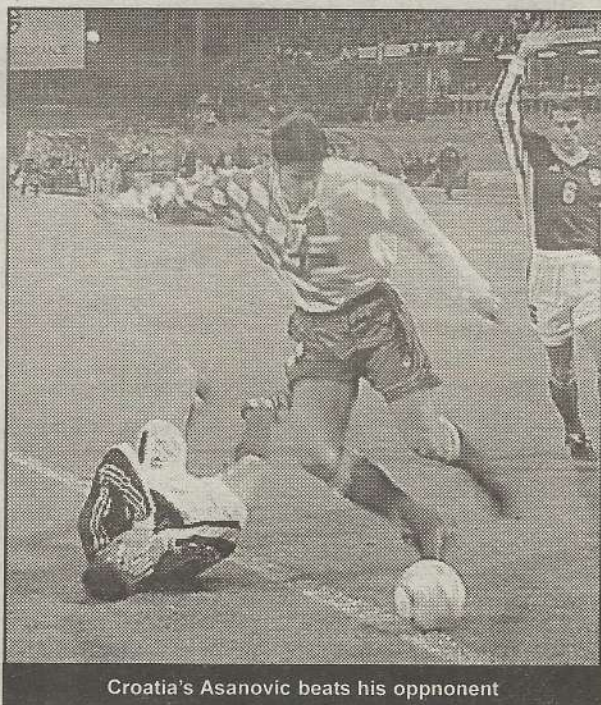
second half, when striker Argend Bekiri came in for defender Milan Stojanovski, but they were unable to conjure up any chances, with Ireland reasserting themselves in the third quarter. They forced three successive corners just before the hour mark, but were unable to get the crucial second, with Mark Kinsella coming closest after 59 minutes, but he was unable to direct his header on target.

However, they defended too deep and allowed the admirably eager Macedonians to dictate the pace in the final 20 minutes.

They had a lucky escape after 88 minutes, when Barnsley striker Georgi Hristov scored from close range after his initial effort had been well saved by Alan Kelly. However, his 'goal' was ruled out by Spanish referee, Juan Antonio Marin, for an apparent hand ball.

Ireland, though, refused to heed that warning and three minutes into injury time, they paid the price for their timidity, when Goran Stavreski headed home from a corner after he was left unmarked.

Ireland know that they will



Croatia's Asanovic beats his opponent

need a much-improved performance in the play-offs on November 13/14 and November 17 if they are to advance to the final round of a major tournament for the first time since 1994.

The Czech Republic celebrated a perfect European Championships qualifying campaign on although they struggled to a 2-0 win at home over the Faroe Islands. It was the classy Czechs tenth win out of ten in the group.

In steady rain at Prague's Letna Stadium, Anderlecht's lanky striker Jan Koller opened the scoring in the 11th minute with his fourth goal in four successive matches in the group, picking up a loose ball just inside the box and hitting a skidding shot in off the left post.

The visitors turned in a spirited performance and their pressing in the second half frustrated



Croatian and Yugoslavian players shake hands after their 2-2 draw

the stronger Czech side.

Temper flared near the hour mark when Czech midfielder Patrik Berger stamped on Pol Thorsteinsson after a fierce challenge from the Faroe Island's player, earning both players red cards.

Finally, Pavel Verbir's header off a Karel Poborsky cross sealed the match for the Czechs in the closing minutes. The win meant the Czechs, who were already the first side to clinch a spot in next year's European Championship final round by sewing up Group Nine in June, ended with an unprecedented 30 points having won all 10 of their matches.

Rowdy celebrations broke out inside the stadium and then spilled onto the streets near Prague Castle with the home fans repeatedly chanting, "If you're not jumping, you're not Czech."

After the match Czech coach Jozef Chovanec looked relieved that his side survived an often ragged match against the team which finished at the bottom of the table.

"Their heart and determination made the match unpleasant for us," said Chovanec.

The Czechs finished 12 points clear of second place Scotland in Group Nine, earning a chance to avenge their loss in the 1996 European Championship finals to Germany. Czech soccer had a major setback when the national team failed to qualify for last year's World Cup.

Abrilliant four-goal display from Real Madrid CF sharpshooter Elvir Balic sent Bosnia-Herzegovina cruising to an emphatic success over Estonia in Tallin - and this after the Estonians had taken an early lead in the closing Qualification Group Nine clash at the Kadriorg Stadium.

There was little indication that Balic would run riot in the early stages, especially as Estonia were a goal up after only

three minutes. Martin Reim split the visiting defence with a fine pass, and Andres Oper showed why Danish champions Aalborg paid one million US Dollars for him by sprinting on and firing past goalkeeper Adnan Guso.

Gradually, Bosnia-Herzegovina eased their way into contention, and spent the rest of the first half piling on the pressure. They were unlucky in the 24th minute, when Faruk Ihtijarevic hit the post with a header, but were back on level terms five minutes before half-time. Balic found the target with a free kick, amid suspicions that Estonian goalkeeper Martin Kaalma - replacing regular first-choice custodian Mart Poom (wrist injury) - had not lined up his defensive wall in an efficient manner.

Whatever Bosnia-Herzegovina's coach Faruk Hadzibegic said to his players at half-time, it had the desired effect - particularly as far as Balic was concerned. He was unstoppable as the Estonians crumbled under fierce pressure.

Balic put the visitors in front after 58 minutes with another fine 20-yard free kick, and made it 3-1 nine minutes later, finding acres of space in the area to convert Marko Topic's pass. Balic completed his personal triumph three minutes from time with yet another free kick - a superb 25-yard effort leaving Kaalma helpless.

The result left Bosnia-Herzegovina in third position in the final table, level on points with Estonia, but ahead of them by virtue of their better results in the direct encounters between the two teams. However, both teams were not in the final shake-up for a place either in the EURO 2000 final round, or the qualifying play-offs.

"We lack the stability to play at the highest level," said Estonian coach Teitur Thordarson. "It's unfortunate that our campaign had to end like this."

Meanwhile, Hadzibegic was satisfied with his side's qualifying campaign. "I think we were unlucky in several games, and we should have gained more points," he said. "We are a talented team, and we are looking forward to future competitions."

UEFA's continuing expansion meant that a record 51 teams - an increase of three from 1996 - took part in the European Championship (EURO 2000). For the first time in history, the 2000 European Championships will be co-hosted, by neighbouring Belgium and the Netherlands.

With the co-hosts qualifying automatically, there was only be fourteen qualifying places available, a reduction from fifteen in EURO 96. The fact that 49 teams

were competing for only 14 places in the finals led to a revised format for the EURO 2000 qualifying competition. In effect, the qualifying competition was played under the same format as that used for the European qualifying phase for the 1998 World Cup. Thus, there were nine groups in all, an increase from eight for EURO 96, with five groups of five teams and four groups of six. As such, the automatic qualifiers were the nine group winners and the second-placed team with the best

record. The remainder of the second placed teams meet each other with the winners of four two-legged play-off matches joining the group winners in EURO 2000.

The play-off draw will take place in Aachen, Germany, on Wednesday.

The first-leg matches between the runners up will be played on the weekend of November 13/14, with the second legs taking place the following Wednesday.

The winners of the nine

groups joining Belgium and Holland in the finals are: Italy, Norway, Germany, France, Sweden, Spain, Romania, Yugoslavia, Czech Republic, Holland, Belgium. Portugal also qualified automatically as the second placed team with the best record.

The following teams finished as runners up in the groups and will be allocated a sparring partner tomorrow: Slovakia, Denmark, Turkey, Ukraine, England, Scotland, Ireland, Israel.

GROUP ONE											
Belarus	0-0	Italy									
Wales	0-2	Switzerland									
		Rey (16)									
		Buhlmann (60)									
	P W D L F A Pts										
Italy	8	4	3	1	13	5	15				
Denmark	8	4	2	2	11	8	14				
Switzerland	8	4	2	2	9	5	14				
Wales	8	3	0	5	7	16	9				
Belarus	8	0	3	5	4	10	3				
GROUP TWO											
Albania	2-1	Georgia									
Rraklli (30)		Arveladze, S (52)									
Kola (36)											
Latvia	1-2	Norway									
Pahars (52)		Solskjaer (51)									
		Flo, T (85)									
Slovenia	0-3	Greece									
		Tsartas (39)									
		Georgiades (43)									
		Nikolaidis (73)									
	P W D L F A Pts										
Norway	10	8	1	1	21	9	25				
Slovenia	10	5	2	3	12	14	17				
Greece	10	4	3	3	11	10	15				
Latvia	10	3	4	3	13	12	13				
Albania	10	1	4	5	8	14	7				
Georgia	10	1	2	7	8	18	5				
GROUP THREE											
Finland	4-1	N Ireland									
Johansson (9)		Whitley, Jeff (59)									
Hyypia (63)											
Kolkka (73, 83)											
Germany	0-0	Turkey									
	P W D L F A Pts										
Germany	8	7	1	1	20	4	19				
Turkey	8	5	2	1	15	6	17				
Finland	8	3	1	3	12	13	10				
N. Ireland	8	1	2	5	4	19	5				
Moldova	8	0	4	4	7	17	4				
GROUP FOUR											
Andorra	0-3	Armenia									
		Petrosyan, Artur									
GROUP FIVE											
Sweden	2-0	Poland									
Andersson, K (64)											
Larsson (90)											
Bulgaria	3-0	Luxembourg									
Borimirov (40)											
Petkov (68)											
Hristov (78)											
	P W D L F A Pts										
Sweden	8	7	1	0	10	1	22				
England	8	3	4	1	14	4	13				
Poland	8	4	1	3	12	8	13				
Bulgaria	8	2	2	4	6	8	8				
Luxembourg	8	0	0	8	2	23	0				
GROUP SIX											
Austria	3-1	Cyprus									
Glieder (5)		Costas (63)									
Vastic (23)											
Herzog (81)											
Spain	3-0	Israel									
Morientes (30)											
Cesar Martin (37)											
Raul (51)											
	P W D L F A Pts										
Spain	8	7	0	1	42	5	21				
Israel	8	4	1	3	25	9	13				
Austria	8	4	1	3	19	20	13				
Cyprus	8	4	0	4	12	21	12				
San Marino	8	0	0	8	1	44	0				
GROUP SEVEN											
Azerbaijan	0-1	Slovakia									
GROUP EIGHT											
Macedonia	1-1	Rep of Ireland									
Stavrevski (90)		Quinn, N (18)									
Croatia	2-2	Yugoslavia									
Boksic (20)		Mijatovic (26)									
Stanic (47)		Stankovic, D (31)									
	P W D L F A Pts										
Yugoslavia	8	5	2	1	18	8	17				
R. Ireland	8	5	1	2	14	6	16				
Croatia	8	4	3	1	13	9	15				
Macedonia	8	2	2	4	13	14	8				
Malta	8	0	0	8	6	27	0				
GROUP NINE											
Czech Republic	2-0	Faroe									
Islands											
Koller (11)											
Verbir (84)											
Estonia	1-4	Bosnia									
Oper (4)		Balijc (42, 87)									
57, 67,											
Scotland	3-0	Lithuania									
Hutchison (48)											
McSwegan (49)											
Cameron (89)											
	P W D L F A Pts										
Czech Rep	10	10	0	0	26	5	30				
Scotland	10	5	3	2	15	10	18				
Estonia	10	3	2	5	15	17	11				
Bosnia	10	3	2	5	14	17	11				
Lithuania	10	3	2	5	7	17	11				
Faroe Isle	10	0	3	7	4	17	3				

NATIONAL SOCCER LEAGUE - ROUND 3

ADELAIDE FORCE v PARRAMATTA POWER

1		1	Andrew Crews
2		2	David Barrett
3	Ivan Zelic	3	Michael Santalab
4	Milan Ivanovic	4	Steve Eagleton
5	Alex Tobin	5	Richard Plesa
6	Carlo Talladira	6	Joe Vrkic
7	Damian Mori	7	Jacob Burns
8	Carl Veart	8	Walter Ardone
9	Nick Sabljak	9	Mile Sterjovski
10	Aurelio Vidmar	10	Joel Griffiths
11	Igor Rodgrives	11	Steve Berry
12	Nathan Day	12	Stephen Laybutt
13	John Fusco	13	Milan Blagojevic
14	Michael Cartwright	14	John Angelucci
15	Louis Brain	15	Danny Townsend
16		17	Danny Kukucka
17	Angelo Costanzo	18	Lachlan Campbell
18		19	Matt Thompson
19		20	Barney Smith
20		21	Ahmid Elrich
21	Dong Ki Kim	22	John Gibson
		28	Peter Bennett
		30	Mike Gibson

Venue: Hindmarsh Stadium - Friday 15 October, 8.00PM
 Head to Head: Played 0 Adelaide wins: 0 Power wins: 0 Draws 0
 Last Week: Adelaide 1-2 away loss to Brisbane Strikers
 Power 2-1 home win over Melbourne Knights

KINGZ v SOUTH MELBOURNE

1	Michael Utting	1	Milan Udvaracz
2	Che Bunce	2	Steve Iosifidis
3	Riki Van Steeden	3	Fausto de Amicis
4	Fabio Macolino	4	Nick Orlic
5	Jonathon Perry	5	Con Blatis
6	Marcus Stergiopoulos	6	David Clarkson
7	Wynton Rufer	7	Steve Panopoulos
8	Chris Jackson	8	Vaughan Coveny
9	Fred de Jong	9	Paul Trimboli
10	Dino Mennillo	10	Michael Curcija
11	Robbie Middleby	11	John Anastasiadis
12	Harry Ngata	12	Richie Alagich
13	Levent Osman	13	Adrian Cuzzupe
14	Batrum Suri	14	Anthony Magnacca
15	Ivan Vicelich	15	Goran Lozanovski
16		16	George Goutzoulis
17	Maciel Edmilson	17	Jim Tsekinis
18	Stuart Riddle	18	Robert Liparoti
21	David Moya	19	Tasos Psonis
22	Aaron Silva	20	Chris Jones
		21	
		22	Mustafa Mustafa

Venue: North Harbour Stadium - Sunday 17 October, 3.00PM
 Head to Head: Played 0 Kingz wins: 0 Souths wins: 0 Draws 0
 Last Week: Kingz 1-2 away loss to Sydney United
 Souths 2-0 home win over Northern Spirit

CANBERRA COSMOS v BRISBANE STRIKERS

1		1	Clint Bolton
2		2	Glenn Gwynne
3	Toplica Popovich	3	Shane Stefanutto
4	Danny Burt	4	Andrew Davidson
5	Nicholas Purdue	5	Matthew Bell
6	Jason Polak	6	Brad Ditton
7		7	
8	Daniel Watkins	8	David Pilic
9	Alex Castro	9	Paul Foster
10	Michael Musitano	10	Wayne Srhoj
11	David Arranz	11	Greg Di Losa
12		12	
13		13	Stuart McClaren
14	Harry James	14	Jade North
15	Glen Kolpak	15	Leo Langone
16	Ilija Prenzovski	16	Chay Hews
18	Nikola Mrdja	17	Jeromy Harris
19	Geoff Howarth	18	Nick Meredith
20	Grant Barlow	19	Wade Baldwin
21	Scott Conlon	20	Daniel Duke
22	Elliot Zwangobani		
25	Ivo De Jesus		
26	Gabriel Gonzalez		
30	Angelo Konstantinou		

Venue: Bruce Stadium - Friday 15 October, 7.30PM
 Head to Head: Played 9 Cosmos wins: 1 Brisbane wins: 7 Draws 1
 Last Week: Cosmos 0-1 home loss to Sydney Olympic
 Strikers 2-1 home win over Adelaide Force

GIPPSLAND FALCONS v SYDNEY UNITED

1	Bojo Jevedjevic	1	John Crawley
2		2	Ray Younis
3	Manny Gotis	3	Mark Racker
4	Mehmed Durakovic	4	Velimir Kupresak
5	Jeff Hopkins	5	Eddie Bosnar
6	Brian MacNichol	6	Vince Savocca
7	Andy Vargas	7	Mirko Jurilj
8	Clayton Bell	8	Nahuel Arrarte
9	Robbie Puca	9	Mario Jermen
10	Sandy Robertson	10	Ante Moric
11	John Hutchinson	11	Tom Pondeljak
12		12	Tom Maric
13	Adrian Savage	13	Matthew Zec
14	Doug Marcina	14	Kain Rastall
15	Jonathon Buhugiar	15	Aytec Genc
16		16	Joe Moric
17	Will Hastie	17	Nick Bosevski
18	Michael Katz	18	Steve Bozinovski
19		19	Greg Saric
		20	Steve Tolios
		25	Ante Deak

Venue: Falcons Stadium - Saturday 16 October, 7.00PM
 Head to Head: Played 15 Falcons wins: 3 United wins: 5 Draws 7
 Last Week: Falcons 1-1 away draw with Carlton
 Sydney United 2-1 home win over Kingz

WOLLONGONG WOLVES v SYDNEY OLYMPIC

1	Leslie Pogliacomini	1	Jim Kourtis
2	George Souris	2	Scott Thomas
3	Alvin Ceccoli	3	Chris Zoricich
4	Robert Stanton	4	Peter Tsekenis
5	David Cervinski	5	Scott Baillie
6	Matthew Horsley	6	Ante Juric
7	Paul Reid	7	Zlatko Arambasic
8	Anthony Surjan	8	Marcus Phillips
9	Sasho Dimoski	9	Pablo Cardozo
10		10	Brett Emerton
11	Scott Chipperfield	11	Chris Kalantzis
12	Neil Harlock	12	
13	Noel Spencer	13	
14	Saso Petrovski	14	Gabriel Mendez
15	David Huxley	15	Lindsay Wilson
16	Peter Lahamas	16	Adrian Cervinski
17	Esala Masi	17	Paul Kohler
18	Chad Bishop	18	John Kyriazopoulos
19	Paul Dimech	19	Nick Carle
20	Daniel Bertrame	20	George Bouhoutsos
21	Christian Zelvis	21	Lee Miot
		22	Pete Zorbas
		23	Sebastian Sinozic

Venue: Brandon Park - Saturday 16 October, 6.30PM
 Head to Head: Played 37 Wolves wins: 9 Olympic wins: 19 Draws 9
 Last Week: Wolves 2-2 away draw with Newcastle
 Olympic 0-1 away win at Canberra

REPLAYED ON OPTUS C7 CHANNEL 12 8PM SATURDAY 16 OCTOBER, 1999

MELBOURNE KNIGHTS v PERTH GLORY

1		1	Danny Milosevic
2	Joey Rayher	2	Robert Trajkovski
3	Ivan Jolic	3	Jamie Harnwell
4	Ante Kovacevic	4	
5	Jason Vukadin	5	Vinko Buljubic
6	John Didulica	6	Gareth Naven
7	Mark Silic	7	Scott Miller
8	Dragi Nastevski	8	Troy Halpin
9	Ivan Kelic	9	Alistair Edwards
10	Paul Urlovic	10	Bobby Despotoski
11	Mijo Trupkovic	11	Kasey Wehrman
12	Murtala Toyin Abbas	12	Peter Buljan
13	Lance Plunkett	13	Jamos Afkos
14	Paul Magdic	14	Dion Valle
15	Ransford Banini	15	
16	Alex Kriatzoglou	16	Con Boutsianis
17	Brandon Vassallo	17	Vas Kalogeracos
18	Roddy Vargas	18	Hamilton Thorp
20	Martin John	19	John Carbone
21	Zeljko Susa	20	Tony Franken
22	Steven Tillinger	21	Ivan Ergic
23	Michael Reda		
24	Hrvoje Matkovic		

Venue: Knights Stadium - Sunday 17 October, 3.00PM
 Head to Head: Played 2 Knights wins: 0 Glory wins: 0 Draws 2
 Last Week: Knights 1-2 away loss to Parramatta Power
 Perth Glory 3-3 home draw with Marconi

LIVE TELECAST FRIDAY 15 OCTOBER 7.30 PM

OPTUS C7 CHANNEL 13



NORTHERN SPIRIT v NEWCASTLE BREAKERS



- 1 John Perosh
- 2 Robert Enes
- 3 Matthew Langdon
- 4 Matthew Bingley
- 5 Mark Rudan
- 6 Luke Casserley
- 7 Robbie Slater
- 8 Tony Perinich
- 9 David Seal
- 10 Clayton Zane
- 11 Troy Cranney
- 12 Simon Catanzaro
- 13 Philip Moss
- 14 Shane Lyons
- 15 Anthony Faria
- 16 Paul Bilokapic
- 17 Paul Wearne
- 18 Graham Arnold
- 19 Jess Van Stratten
- 20 Michael Cunico
- 22 Paul Henderson (pic above)
- 23 Adam Snyder
- 24 Elvis Olic
- 25 Ryan Griffiths
- 26 Jack Sobczyk
- 27 Adam Griffiths
- 28 Ian Crook



- 1 Bob Catlin
- 2 Shane Pryce
- 3 Andrew Roberts
- 4 Adam Sanderson
- 5 Todd McManus
- 6 Glenn Sprod
- 7 Travis Dodd
- 8 Mark Wilson
- 9 Chris Tancheski
- 10 John Buonavoglia
- 11 Luke Tomich
- 12 Robert Anglevski
- 13 Brad Wieczorek
- 14 Greg Owens
- 15 Joshua Ferguson
- 16 Vasko Trpcevski
- 17 Paul Wheeler
- 18 Chad Mansley
- 20 Bradley Swancott
- 21 Peter Juchniewicz



Venue: North Sydney Oval
Friday 15 October 7.30pm

Head-to-Head: Played two
Spirit wins: none
Newcastle wins: none
Draws: two

Last Week:
Spirit: 0-2 loss to South Melbourne
Newcastle: 2-2 home draw with Wollongong

REPLAYED SUNDAY 17 OCTOBER 7.30 PM

OPTUS C7 CHANNEL 12



MARCONI STALLIONS v CARLTON



- 1 Chad Gibson
- 2 Mark Babic
- 3
- 4
- 5 Dominic Longo
- 6 Pan-Keum Kim
- 7 Christian Care
- 8 Darren McDonald
- 9 Zeljko Babic (pic above)
- 10 Brad Maloney
- 11 Mike Smith
- 12
- 13 Danny Invincible
- 14 Buddy Farah
- 15 Pierluigi di Gia
- 16
- 17 Francis Awaritefe
- 18 Harry Karl
- 19 Brendan Ranaud
- 20 David Aceski
- 21 Paolo Marchesini
- 22 Kris Trajanovski
- 23 Vlado Zoric



- 1 Dean Anastasiadis
- 2 Dave McPherson
- 3 Craig Deans
- 4 Simon Colosimo
- 5 Sean Douglas
- 6 Andrew Marth
- 7 Stuart Slater
- 8 Mark Atkinson
- 9 Alex Moreira
- 10 Lubo Lapsansky
- 11 Archie Thompson
- 12 Mike Conroy
- 13 Steve Martin
- 14 John Markovski
- 15 Con Anthopoulos
- 16 David Terminello
- 17 Joe Tricarico
- 18 David Della Rocca
- 19 Serdar Pir
- 20 Adrian Cagalj
- 21 Andrew Packer
- 22 Angelo Mottiopoulos
- 23 Colin Azzopardi
- 24 Joshua Kennedy



Venue: Marconi Stadium
Sunday 17 October 5.00pm

Head to Head: Played five
Marconi wins: two
Carlton wins: three
Draws: none

Last Week:
Marconi: 3-3 draw with Perth Glory
Carlton: 1-1 home draw with Gippsland Falcons

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